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The Church of England before the reformation

Number.....

THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

"There is nothing so feeble and weake, so that it be true, but it shall find place and be able to stand against all falshode. Truth is the daughter of tyme, and tyme is the mother of truth. And whatsoever is beseged of truth cannot long continue, and upon whose syde truth doth stand, that ought not to be thought transitory, or that it will ever fall."—Bishop Fox, 1537.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

BEFORE THE REFORMATION

BY THE REV.

DYSON HAGUE, M.A.

RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA; FORMERLY DEAN OF WYCLIFFE COLLEGE, TORONTO; AND EXAMINER IN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

IT is with pleasure that, in response to a kind wish of the Author's, I commend the present work to the careful and candid attention of my brother Churchmen.

A pressure of duties exceptionally heavy has made it impossible for me to go through the volume with the detailed care which I could wish to bring to it. But I know enough already of Mr. Hague's literary work to be assured of his scrupulous desire to be accurate in matters of fact, and just in matters of inference. And I have made proof enough of this book to feel confident that he has done his utmost to carry out that desire in its pages, and with very valuable results.

As regards the main position of the book, its thesis so to speak, my own convictions have long taken the general line which it lays down. It is both right and delightful to trace, in the pre-Reformation periods of our Church, the preservation of the central and fundamental deposits of revealed truth, and the often recurring examples of the

powerful working of Divine grace in individual saints and servants of God.

In respect of our Prayer-Book, it is a study as welcome as it is important and informing, to identify all through the services the large mass of materials and the great features of the structure itself, which make our continuity with the past so impressive. But there is another side. We need often to be even urgently reminded that, speak with what euphemisms we will, the medieval type of worship, and the prevalent medieval view of religion, were in many grave respects corrupted exceedingly, if Holy Scripture is the standard. We need to have it said emphatically, and without reserve, so that it is always said "with charity," that our Reformation was not merely a repudiation of Papal claims; it was a courageous while reverent expurgation of medieval doctrine.

Our Prayer-Book in 1549, not to speak of 1552, was not only an immense contrast to the past (as it was) by the mere fact that it was in English from end to end. It was a contrast in points of vital importance in respect of the doctrine, particularly the eucharistic doctrine, which it enjoined upon English worshippers.

At the present time we hear on many sides in our Anglican world assertions, strong and earnest, of the very medievalism which was thus "expurgated." Who has not heard (to take one example) the affirmation that, though our Articles very vigorously

repudiate "the sacrifices of masses," they mean no protest against the sacrifice of the mass? Let those who want a complete disproof of that surprising position, read Mr. Dimock's learned, temperate, irrefragable statements and reasonings in his *Sacrificia Missarum* and *Dangerous Deceits*. But I fear the assertions have a vastly larger audience than these patient, thorough, scientific disproofs. So there is need to call public attention to the real state of the case, in a form at once accurate and popular.

For myself, I am grateful to Mr. Dyson Hague for his important contribution in this urgently necessary direction. Believing, with a conviction only strengthening as time goes, that our Church is as definitely Protestant (in the historical sense of that word) as she is Catholic (in the primeval sense of that word), I welcome cordially this able effort towards placing the facts of the case before as large a public as possible.

H. C. G. MOULE, D.D.

Ridley Hall,
Cambridge, 1897.

PREFACE.

THIS volume has been written for two reasons.

First, Because one of the great needs of the present day is a more intelligent interest on the part of Churchmen in the past history and present position of the Church of England. It can be safely asserted that a large number of educated people are very ignorant with regard to the past history of the English Church, and are unable, therefore, to appreciate the extraordinary change that was effected in its practices and doctrine at the Reformation period. The object of this work is to show in as clear a manner as possible what the Church actually was, and how complete is the contrast between its position then and now.

This is not a history. It is a historical study. It is intended to be suggestive; a help to the understanding of the truth of English Church history. The occasional repetition, the employment of emphatic expressions, and the adoption at times of an almost controversial tone are to be explained by the fact that the book is intended for general reading,

and that the subject is treated in a colloquial manner.

Second, Because of the treatment of English Church history which has obtained currency during the past twenty or thirty years.

It can also be safely asserted that a very large number of educated Churchmen have been led to accept the fallacy that the Church of England before the Reformation was quite distinct from Rome in doctrine and practice, and that we were practically in the same position before the Reformation as we are now. It is, of course, a difficult matter to overthrow a popular idol; but I have no hesitation in saying that a closer investigation of the subject compels one to conclude that much of the current interpretation of Church history before the Reformation is "a fond thing vainly invented."

The continuity theory is a figment. It can only be maintained by an ignoring of the facts of history, and by the special pleading of an advocate who is determined to carry out his theory. Mr. Tomlinson, in his "Legal History of Canon Stubbs," shows to what lengths a passion for "historical continuity" may carry even such an able historian as the present Bishop of Oxford.

If Hallam, in his "Constitutional History" (note, p. 51, chap. ii.), warned us to be on our guard against "the Romanising high churchmen, such as Collier and others, who sometimes scarce keep on the mask of Protestantism," what would he have said if he had

lived to a day when such Church histories as those of Jennings, and Hore, and Cutts, and Wakeman, are publicly recommended to candidates for ordination by Bishops of the Church of England? Their treatment of English Church history recalls what Bishop Burnet said in his Preface about Heylin. "Dr. Heylin wrote smoothly and handsomely; his method and style are good, and his work was generally more read than anything that had appeared before him; but either he was very ill informed, or very much led by his passions; and he, being wrought on by most violent prejudices against some that were concerned in that time (I presume he refers to the Reformers), delivers many things in such a manner, and so strangely, that *one would think he had been secretly set on to it by those of the Church of Rome*, though I doubt not he was a sincere Protestant, but violently carried away by some particular conceits. In one thing he is not to be excused; that he never vouched any authority for what he writ." Even Canon Perry, the ablest and fairest of the modern Church historians, allows himself to be carried away by his historical continuity theory.

But the facts of Church history are more to English Churchmen than the theories of Church historians, and I earnestly trust that this volume will give the reader a clearer grasp of the profound difference between the Romanised National Church of the pre-Reformation age, and the National Church of England since, and of the marvellous change that

was effected in the doctrine and ritual of the Church without alteration of its episcopal order on the one hand, or of its organic identity on the other.

With regard to the books of reference one must not, of course, regard them all as of equal authority.

But however Burnet and Collier, Froude and Freeman, Fox and Perry, Stubbs and Milner, may have differed in their views, I have only referred to them in matters of fact.

I desire to acknowledge with gratitude the very valuable suggestions that I have received in the preparation of this work—

From the Rev. H. J. Cody, M.A., Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Wycliffe College, Toronto, to whom I am indebted for many of the valuable references in Chapters ix. and x.

From the Rev. Principal Moule, D.D., of Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

From the Rev. John de Soyres, M.A. (Cantab.), Rector of St. John's Church, St. John, New Brunswick, and Hulsean Lecturer.

From my father, Mr. George Hague, of Montreal, without whose kind counsels, sound judgment, and sympathetic interest, this work would never have reached its present form.

I desire especially to acknowledge the very valuable help that I have received from the Rev. W. I. Moran, late scholar of Merton College, Oxford, and Vice-Principal of the Elland Training School for Clergy,

Hull, to whom I am indebted for a most careful revision, and the general verification of references.

It is my earnest hope that this work which has been prepared amidst the incessant pressure of my duties as the Rector of a large and important city parish, and the limitations imposed by the fact of my being a Canadian, and, therefore, deprived of immediate access to the great English libraries, will nevertheless be found helpful to that large and growing body who recognise the Reformation of the Church of England as the work of the mighty hand of God. Although I am a Canadian Churchman, I have as a Canadian, the pride of a citizen of the Empire, and as a Churchman the loyalty of a member of the Church of England; and my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that the great work which was accomplished through God's goodness at that momentous epoch will ever be the glory and the power of the Church and of the Nation of England, and that the auspicious reign of our beloved Queen may be signalised by a determination on the part of the Churchmen of the Empire to maintain inviolate the Protestant Reformed Religion of which she is by Royal right and solemn vow the constitutional defender.

D. H.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY—THE THREE GREAT PHASES OF ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY.

The history of the Church of England particularly fascinating—The reasons of this—Knowledge of its epochs necessary—The three great phases of Church of England history—Object of this work to emphasise the contrasts offered by the various stages—The Church of England now fundamentally different from what it once was—It teaches now as faith what it once destroyed as heresy—The change not a formal one, but real.

THE History of the Church of England is a fascinating study.

No other Church we know of has preserved, throughout a long and chequered career, an existence so distinctly national. No other Church can claim, for so long a space of time, the right to be considered an independent Church. No other Church in Christendom has passed through such crises, or maintained in such happy combination the order of antiquity and the truth of the Reformation.

The history of the other ancient Churches is quite different. With some, it is that of a candlestick removed out of its place, like the Church or Churches of Africa. Or it is that of a quasi-national Church with a finally submerged identity, the case of the Gallican Church. Or it is that of an apostolic and catholic communion becoming more and more cor-

rupt in doctrine and ritual, teaching blasphemous fables as truths, and deceitful superstitions as Divine ordinances, which is the history of the Roman and Eastern Churches (Articles xxii., xxxi.).

The Church of England stands alone. It is a Church that is at once ancient and modern, national and independent, Protestant and Catholic. Its antiquity is as indisputable as that of Rome, and yet no Church is more in touch with present-day life. It was Protestant before the word Protestant was heard of; it is now, in the true sense, more Catholic than Rome. It is a national Church, like that of Russia; and though, like the Russian Church, it is independent of Rome, it is not, like the Russian Church, corrupt and unreformed.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the study of the development and vicissitude of so unique a Church must be possessed of peculiar interest; for a Church like the Church of England did not attain its age in a century. Its growth is like the growth of a mighty nation, with its artless infancy and wilful childhood, its erring youth and amended age. Its history is the story of faults and struggles; of errors and aspirations; of decline and falls; of despair and victory. It is like the history of the man who has worked out through the shocks of battle and the mistakes of the past the character he has finally attained. It is the old, old story of the prodigal son, who sank and sinned, but afterwards arose and came to his father a reformed and ennobled man.

To know and understand, therefore, the present position of the Church of England it is necessary for us to know its past. We must see what it was and has been, before we can grasp what it has become and

now is. A converted man is the same man as he was before his conversion ; but his views are changed, his character is altered. "A garden, before it is weeded and after it is weeded, is the same garden. A vine, before it is pruned and after it is pruned, is the same vine." The Church of England is the same Church as it was before the Reformation ; but its teaching, its doctrine, its method of worship, have undergone a marvellous alteration. How much it has been altered, and why it has been altered, we can only know by understanding thoroughly what the Church of our forefathers was in its early, and medieval, and pre-Reformation days. We must trace the destinies of the Church through the long course of fifteen or sixteen hundred years. We must carefully distinguish between things that differ, even though in name and form they are the same. We must learn to identify things that are similar though locally, nominally, and in form, they differ. We must review the various phases assumed by the Church, and study the significance of the stages reviewed.

Broadly speaking, the Church in England has passed in the course of its evolution through three great phases.

The first was the period of formation.

The second was the period of deformation.

The third was the period of reformation.

The first, though interesting, is naturally the period about which least is known, and least is accurately recorded. It was the time of infancy, the time of the early British or Celtic Church.

The next is the long and dreary period of medievalism, in its earlier, and later, and latest stages of development, during which the Church of England

became Romish, Romanised, and Roman. It is a period that requires most careful attention on the part of the Church student, as the lines of ecclesiastical and doctrinal demarcation between the Church of England and the Church of Rome become fainter and fainter, and then gradually disappear.

The third was the period of restoration and reformation, when the Romanised Church of England not only completely cast off the bondage of the Papacy, but reasserted and re-established as the doctrine and worship of the national Church, the Scriptural and truly Catholic doctrines of apostolic Christianity and the simple and uncorrupted worship of the apostolic age.

Each of these periods must be reviewed with impartiality and care, and the various stages of their development, and the striking differences between them, observed and understood. For the object of this work is, not to write a history of the Church of England, a work that has been done again and again by writers of great name and fame, or even to outline the story of the period of the Reformation, but rather to bring out simply and clearly the doctrinal and liturgical changes through which the Church in England has passed, and to emphasise the remarkable contrasts that the study of these changes suggests. It is to bring out the salient features of each providential epoch in the critical eras of its history, and to show from the unforeseen revolutions that have been accomplished, the work of the mighty hand of God. It is, above all, to give an accurate and careful statement of the exact position of the Church of England, doctrinal, liturgical, and political, in each of these three great stages, in order that the signifi-

cance of both liturgical uses and doctrinal phrases may be thoroughly understood by the inheritors of the invaluable privileges of the English Church.

It is natural that the periods most dwelt upon will be the period of the Reformation, and the age that preceded and prepared for it. It was then that the Church, by a double reformation, the one negative and separative, its emancipation from the Papacy, the other, positive and restorative, the re-establishment of primitive doctrine and order, emerged into its present position of freedom and truth. In the providence of God it then became and has since remained, in the fullest and truest sense of the words, an independent, as opposed to a Roman, a Protestant, as opposed to a Papist, an evangelical, as opposed to a Romish Church. The change was not made in a day. It was not made altogether by men who desired it. It was not made in the way that many of its promoters wished it. It was not perfect. It was not accomplished without errors and mistakes. It was almost wholly unanticipated. It was strangely beyond the intention of its original promoters. But as a change it was thorough. It was radical. It was fundamental. It was a change, not of practices merely, but of principles. It was a change of character, not of name. And it was a change which manifested at every step the overruling providence of God.

The contrast between the Church of England in the last year of the reign of Edward VI. and the last year of the reign of his grandfather, Henry VII., was as great as that between the Church of Rome in the days of Eleutherus and the Church of Rome in the days of Pope Julius II.

In spite of all attempts on the part of certain

modern Church writers to minimise the significance of this contrast by emphasising the continuity of the Church and the antiquity of the National Establishment, the fact remains that the Church of England in doctrine and ritual stands forth to-day in a totally different position, and as the representative of a totally different system of doctrine, from that in which it stood in the medieval age. That the Church of England is one, and ancient. That the Church of England of to-day is the same body corporate as the Church in England, if not the Church of England, many centuries ago. That the vicissitudes of several stormy centuries have not altered in any great degree her constitution, or changed her ancient name. That the Church of England was in a real sense an independent Church centuries before Rome's figment of universal bishopship was heard of. All this must be heartily admitted. These are facts; and facts cannot be withstood.

But that the Church of England now occupies a different position, doctrinally and liturgically, from what it did medievally; that it teaches now as truth what it once branded as heresy, and brands as error what it once taught as truth; must also be plain to every one who has impartially investigated its development during the first, and its deterioration during the last of the centuries before the Reformation, and has grasped the real significance of the practices it then practised, and the doctrines it then taught.

Of the Church of England it can be asserted as truly as it was asserted of the great apostle: "he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed." The Church which once burned a man at the stake for teaching that

Christ's natural body cannot be in two places or more at once, now teaches in the very words of the man that it once destroyed as a heretic, that the natural blood and body of Christ are in heaven, and not here, it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one (Fox's "Examination of John Frith," Book viii.; Froude's "History," i. 489).

The Church which once persecuted and imprisoned men for refusing the Romish doctrine of purgatory, and pardons, and the adoration of images, and the worship of saints, now sets forth as its doctrine, that these very doctrines are foolish superstitions, grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God. The Church which burned one of its clergy for not believing in transubstantiation, now teaches as its faith that transubstantiation is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. In one word, the Church which once preached the mass, transubstantiation, purgatory, image worship, saint worship, communion in one kind, and clerical celibacy, has now destroyed them; and the Church which once destroyed the doctrine of the sufficiency and supremacy of the Scriptures, justification by faith, the two sacraments, the reception of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner by means of faith only (Articles xxviii., xxix.), the one oblation of Christ once offered on the Cross, and the worship of the people in their own tongue, now preaches them as the teaching of the Church (Gal. i. 23). The change that has been accomplished in the Church of England is thus no mere nominal or

accidental one; nor does the great Reformation era, as some modern Church writers would fain make us believe, mark a mere formal and non-essential transition in the history of its evolution. The change was not nominal; it was real. Nominally the Church of England was not changed at all. It was the Church of England before the Reformation, and it was the Church of England after the Reformation. Yet really it was changed. It was the same, and yet it was not the same. It was a change, not of accidents but of essentials; not of form but of condition. It was a change, not of the form or of that which pertains to the well-being of the Church, but of the doctrine and of that which pertains to the very being of the Church. The accidental, the formal, the corporal, and the external, remain largely unchanged; the essential, the internal, and the doctrinal, the very principles and the character of the Church, these were absolutely changed. In one word, the Church was reformed.

To trace the various phases of the progress of error and corruption, and to understand the strange medley of events by which truth was retrieved and Christ's faith re-established, is the purpose of this work.

CHAPTER II.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN ITS EARLIEST STAGES.

The English Church in its earliest stages—The probable founders of the Church in England—Three things certain about the early British Church—A Church, an independent Church, an organised Church—The Roman tradition about Eleutherius valueless—The early British Church not Roman in origin, submission, or doctrine—The Councils of Sardica gave no authority to the Roman Bishops—The former position of the Bishop of Rome—The doctrinal position of the early British Church—Not heretical—Held all the verities of the Christian faith—Ignorant of superstitions, practices, and corruptions introduced later—And also of many dangerous doctrines—But even before fifth century there were evidences of departure from the simplicity of the primitive faith—Practices then in Church use now disallowed by the Church of England—How is this consistent with Christ's promise of the Spirit to guide His Church to the end—The promise of the Spirit did not hinder error in Galatia and Laodicea even in the apostolic age—The meaning of reverting to primitive Church teaching—Popery in the true sense was in the early Church—The significance of the term Popery according to Bishop Ridley.

FOLLOWING the example of the sacred evangelist we will, first of all, go back to the very fountain head of the subject, in order that we gain an understanding of some of the more important matters pertaining to the history of the Church from the very first. As the method of question and answer has often been found helpful to the student, we propose to simplify the subject propounded by setting it forth in this form. The question in each case will open up the subject of inquiry, and the response as fully as possible explain it.

I. *When, and by whom, was the Church in England founded?*

When, where, and by whom the Church in England was founded will never probably be certainly known. Perhaps it was by some soldier or merchant converts of St. Paul; perhaps by some apostolic men; perhaps even by St. Paul himself. It is possible that some of the Syrian Christians, who were scattered abroad on the death of Stephen, penetrated even to Britain preaching the Word. Or more likely that Bran, the father of Caractacus or Caradoc the British king, first brought to his native land the glad news of Christ.

Many and curious are the traditions of old, one thing only being certain that the British Church never claimed or seemed anxious to claim St. Peter as its founder. After all it matters little. The great thing is: Christ's Gospel came to Britain and the Church was founded. A branch of the Church of Christ, with regular Christian order, existed in Britain centuries before Augustine arrived as the apostle of Rome.

II. *If there is no certainty then about the origin of the Church in England, are there any matters about its early history that are certainly known?*

There are. It can be safely said that these points are historically certain.

1. There was in Great Britain a Christian organisation or Church at least three centuries before the advent of Augustine, the missionary delegate of the Church of Rome.

2. The ancient British Church, or Celtic Church, had a formal organisation; bishops, liturgy, and clergy. When we speak of organised Christianity, we mean Church Christianity. That is, the Christians of the land were incorporated in a regular society, with officers, rules, forms of worship, and articles of

faith. The proof of this is that in A.D. 314, a church Synod was convened at Arles in Gaul, by the Emperor Constantine, at which were present three metropolitan Bishops of the British Church: "Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelphius of Caerleon on Usk; Eborius Episcopus de Civitate Ebora cenci provincia Britannia; Restitutus Episcopus de Civitate Londinensi provincia suprascripta; Adelfius Episcopus de Civitate Colonia Londinensium; exinde sacerdos presbyter, Arminius diaconus" (Mansi, Concilia. Quoted by Haddan in Smith's "Dict. Antiq.," i. 142. See also Bright's "Early English Church History," page 9; Stokes' "Ireland and the Celtic Church," page 11).

It is also probable, though not demonstrable, that British Bishops were present at the Council of Nice in 325. It is almost certain that a deputation of British Bishops were at the Council of Sardica in A.D. 343. They were certainly present, says Professor Stokes, at the Council of Ariminum in 359 (Stokes, *ibid.*, page 11). All of which things prove, not only that the Church in Britain was an organised corporation, but that its organisation was episcopal.

3. This Church was in a very real sense an independent Church. Though it could not strictly be called, in those days, a national Church, it was certainly independent of Roman jurisdiction. It was not identical with Rome. It was not subject to Rome. There is no evidence of any value that either British Christianity, or the order and liturgy of the British Church were from Roman sources. (Maskell, "The Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England," Preface lii.)

It is probable that the organisation of the British Church is to be traced to the Church

at Lyons, a Church of Eastern origin, and that her ritual and liturgy were similar to that of the ancient Gallican Church. This Gallican Liturgy, by the way, was probably employed in the apostolic Church of Ephesus, and was brought by Irenæus to Lyons in Gaul. This seems to bear out the fact that in its formation the British Church was "oriento-apostolical," rather than Roman. The ancient British Church by whomsoever founded was a stranger to the Bishop of Rome and all his pretended authority.

III. *But is it not claimed by historians of the Church of Rome that the Bishop of Rome sent missionaries to England before the third century, thus establishing a claim for the Church of Rome?*

It is. But the old tradition about the British King Lucius sending to Eleutherius (or Eleutherus) the Bishop of Rome, and the success of the two missionaries, Fagan and Damian, that were despatched by him to England can hardly be taken as a proof that the British Church was in any way subject to Rome, or indebted to its agents for its organisation.

If there is anything in the tradition it rather tells the other way. For the Roman Bishop in sending a message to Lucius is reported to have said: "You have the Holy Scriptures; out of them by God's grace take a law; and by that law rule your kingdom. For you are God's vicar in your kingdom" (Fox, Book ii. 275). This certainly seems to show that the Bishop of Rome at that time considered the British Church as an independent Church, and spoke in a very different tone from a medieval or modern Roman Pope.

There is not a trace throughout the letter of their submission to him as the supreme head of the Church

on earth, or his assumption of any such title as Universal Bishop. Nor is the appeal to the infallibility *ex cathedra* of Christ's Vicars, but to the Word of God as the law of Christ. The judgment of Mosheim with regard to the story of Lucius is as follows: "As to Lucius, I agree with the best British writers in supposing him to be the restorer and second father of the English Churches, and not their original founder. That he was a king is not probable; because Britain was then a Roman province. He might be a nobleman, and governor of a district. His name is Roman. His application, I can never believe, was made to the Bishop of Rome. It is much more probable that he sent to Gaul for Christian teachers. The independence of the ancient British Churches of the See of Rome, and their observing the same rites as the Gallic Churches, which were planted by Asiatics, and particularly in regard to the time of Easter; show that they received the Gospel from Gaul and not from Rome. ("Ecc. History," vol. i. pages 99, 100, Carter's Edition.)

IV. *Then the early British Church cannot in any true sense be said to be Roman either as to its origin, its submission, or its doctrine?*

No. It certainly cannot.

As to its Roman origin we have seen that with one trivial, and unreliable exception, the traditions of the early British Church agree that whoever founded the faith there, it was not the Church of Rome.

As to Roman submission, the very idea of the universal supremacy of the Roman episcopate so dear to modern Romanists, was unknown in the early centuries.

The unwarrantable claim that no decree of the

early Councils would be considered as valid without the sanction of the Bishop of Rome arose from the fact that as a rule the Bishops of Rome were not personally present at the General Councils, being represented by their legates.

The third, fourth, and fifth Canons of the Council of Sardica, made so much of by Roman authorities (see Capel's "Catholic," page 52) because they give the Bishop of Rome the right to receive appeals, must be a terrible disappointment to any Romanist who is a sincere searcher for truth. For the authority was simply given to the Bishop of Rome as an individual ("Ad Julium, non ad papam Romanum," Theophilus Anglicanus, page 144); the authority was, moreover, given by a mere Synod, and that not a General Synod; and even that very local and temporary authority was of a very limited and natural kind. It simply appointed the Bishop of Rome as a kind of arbiter or referee for ecclesiastical disputes that might arise in the West; and to crown it all, this decree was afterwards reversed by a General Council.

The Council of Constantinople, which dealt very clearly with the subject of appeals, not only makes no mention whatever of the final authority of the Bishop of Rome, but declares that appeals from provincial Bishops are to be carried to the great Synod of the patriarchate.

The Council of Chalcedon destroyed completely the pretended headship of the Pope, and the figment of papal claims, by asserting that the Roman Bishop's eminence was not *jure divino*, but simply because of the political and geographical importance of the city of Rome, and that any eminence he enjoyed was equally enjoyed by the Patriarch of the East. It

may be added that not one of the four General Councils was presided over by a Bishop of Rome, and the fifth and sixth each excommunicated a Bishop of Rome as a heretic. (Barrow, 325–430.) In short, there is nothing in history to show that the Church in Britain was subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the Pope, just as there is nothing in history to show that the Bishop of Rome before the seventh century claimed official supremacy over all the Christian Churches, or had any right to the title of Universal Bishop. Nay, more; it was Gregory, a Bishop of Rome, who actually declared that any Bishop assuming the title of Universal Bishop was in danger of being Antichrist! As to the early British Church being Roman in doctrine, it can only be asserted by those who adhere to the delusion that in those days all Catholic doctrine was Roman doctrine. It did, indeed, hold and teach very much the same doctrine as the Church of Rome in that day taught; but it did not on that account either receive its doctrine from the Holy See, or hold what the Church of Rome teaches to-day.

In short, of the early British Church it can be said it was Catholic, not Roman. It was independent, not papal.

V. *But if it was not Roman, what was the exact doctrinal position of the early British Church?*

The question of the doctrinal position of the early British Church is a most difficult one. It must be remembered, for one thing, that the Church was in a comparatively infant state. Intellectually, it had few strong representatives. Theologically, it had little need for the statement of explicit teaching on various points of doctrine.

It is controversy that elicits definition, and heresy is the forerunner of orthodoxy.

The progress of error in the early Church, though steady, was not as rapid as in later eras, and the differences between the churches of Catholic Christendom, both as regards ritual and doctrine, were for centuries not very marked. The British Churches, the Gallican Churches, and the Churches of Constantinople and Rome held alike the great verities of the Christian faith, affirmed in the so-called Creed of the Apostles, and the General Councils of Nice and Constantinople. They accepted the Holy Scriptures as the final authority of all doctrine, and taught as the foundation of all religion the great facts of the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and the Ascension, the power and presence of the Holy Ghost, and the truth of the Holy Trinity. Of any formulated scheme of doctrine such as the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Tridentine decrees, there is not a trace. This Catholic faith was the faith of the primitive Church in Britain, and there was little need for the British Church to assert its position as to Catholic orthodoxy. With the exception of a temporary spread of the Pelagian fever which was soon allayed by the Gallican (some say Roman) envoys, Bishop Germanus and Bishop Lupus, the faith of the Church in Britain seems to have been untroubled by heresy. Bede says (quoted by D'Aubigné, "Hist. Reform.," v. 24) the British Churches refused to receive this perverse doctrine and to blaspheme the grace of Jesus Christ. In fine, the faith of the Catholic Church as to the great verities of Christianity was the faith of the New Testament as promulgated by the apostles, reasserted by their successors, summed up in

the creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed councils.

VI. *Are we then to understand that the faith and worship of the early British Church was in all respects a true and pure transcript of the simple faith of the New Testament, and that the errors which crept into the Catholic Church in later centuries were then unknown?*

This, again, is a hard question to answer, for it is difficult to gauge ancient things by modern standards.

On the one hand, it may be certainly asserted that the early British Church knew nothing of those corrupt and dangerous doctrines which defiled both the Church of Rome and the Church of England in later centuries. There was no such thing as Divine worship in an unknown tongue. There was no compulsory celibacy of the clergy. There was no withholding of the cup from the laity. There was no such thing as a confessional box. There was no such doctrine as transubstantiation. The ideas of pilgrimages, and Mariolatry, and papal supremacy, and invocation of saints, and pilgrimages, and shrines, and indulgences, were at the first unknown. In one word, it can be asserted that the great body of Roman doctrine, and the great system of Romish sacerdotal religion, with its abuses of vanity and superstition, were not to be found in the primitive faith of the British Church.

We search in vain in the lives of Patrick or Columba for any sanction of these superstitious and blasphemous and dangerous doctrines which afterwards were received in the Catholic Churches, and are now plainly denounced by the Church of England. To them the Holy Scriptures were the only rule of faith. The grace of Christ rather than the merit of

works was the means of salvation. Outward observances and forms were not the bulk of religion or even the chief channels of grace. It is certain that they were ignorant of such a system of worship as became common in Europe from the tenth or twelfth century. The complex ceremonialism of medieval Christianity was utterly unheard of. The modern Romish doctrine of apostolical succession, with its accompanying tenets of sacramental justification and exclusive sacerdotal absolution, was unknown. The early British Church was episcopal, but there seems to be ground for supposing that it gave administrative episcopal powers to presbyters, as in the case of the presbyter-abbots of Iona, the bishops being reduced to the position of the chorepiscopi or country bishops of the primitive Church. The Celtic ordinations and consecrations were not objected to by Bede, or Lanfranc, or Anselm.*

But it is certain that Bishop Wilfrid and Archbishop Theodore resolutely refused to recognise the validity of Celtic orders ("Ecc. Ang.," page 35; Perry, "Eng. Ch. Hist.," pp. 58–60); and the English Church of 816, then strongly Romanized, declared that Scotch and Irish orders were uncertain. (Perry, page 92.) A careful study of Bishop Lightfoot's outline of the development of the episcopate in his dissertation on the Christian ministry will confirm this historically. ("Epis. Phil.," pp. 227–244.)

It was liturgical, but its prayers were simple and "understanded of the people." It had ceremonies and

* Kurtz, i. 299, and D'Aubigné, v. 28, both assert that these presbyter-bishops ordained and consecrated other bishops. The Latin quotation from Bede in D'Aubigné, which I have verified in the original, is hardly clear enough, however, to justify that interpretation.

forms, but they were of "godly intent and purpose devised, and had not yet turned to vanity and unprofitableness, or become abused through superstitious blindness," as was afterwards the case in the Church of England.

But, on the other hand, it may be asserted with equal certainty that there appeared in the primitive British Church, even in the fourth and fifth centuries, many signs of a departure from the simplicity of the faith and worship of the primitive apostolic Church. The primitive faith and worship of the Church of Jesus Christ can only be that which finds sanction in, or authorisation from, the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament. The Apostolic Church can only signify in the final meaning the Church in the time of the apostles and during the apostolic age. (See the teaching of the Church of England in Articles vi., xix., xx., xxi.) It is certain that the last of the apostles had scarcely departed this life, before corruptions of human device began to degrade the primitive religion of the Church of Christ. The forms and ceremonies of religion multiplied to the exclusion of the inward realities of religion. Things indifferent gradually assumed the value of things essential, and men, and things, and places overshadowed the Word and Spirit and life Divine.

The germs and faint beginnings of formal religion which were plainly discernible even in the apostolic age, as the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians and Timothy show, grew apace in the second and third centuries, and before two hundred years had passed, the rudimentary developments of sacerdotalism and what we would call Romish religion, were growing with a rapid growth.

Long before the Roman Augustine arrived in England (597), ceremonies and practices which are now disallowed in the Church of England, were in universal use in the then Catholic Church; and the memorials of those days furnish abundant proof that the system of religion countenanced doctrines and observances now entirely unauthorised, and directly contrary to the teaching of the doctrinal standard of the Church of England as it is now established.

There is no regulation in the Church of England ordering the clergy to be shaven or practise the tonsure, permitting the use of holy water, or enjoining veils for nuns.

There is no authorisation in the Church of England for the use of the word host, or any injunction that it should be made of unleavened bread. There is no sanction in the Church of England for the use of the word altar, or any shadow of authority for the words mass and masses.

Yet all these things were known and practised in the early Christian Church before the end of the third century of the Christian era. It is true that some writers think that the holy water was not used in Britain till a later age, and the ancient British clergy, who were called Culdees, rejected the *tonsura Petri*, that is, the Roman tonsure; but then they had a form of shaving the head peculiar to themselves.

There is no authority in the English Church to-day for the use of lights in the churches in daylight, or for the employment of incense. Stone altars are distinctly illegal. Auricular confession is vigorously denounced in the second part of the Homily on Repentance as a device of the adversaries of the Church of England. And the worshipping and

adoration of images and relics, and the invocation of saints are regarded as fond things vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture (Art. xxii.). Yet all these things were in use in the primitive Church before the conclusion of the fifth century. (Kurtz, "Church History," pp. 222, 223, 225, 229.)

How far the British Church remained undefiled by the increasing ecclesiastical corruptions, it is hard to say. Their remoteness from the city of Rome, the centre of worldly pomp and fashion, may have preserved them to a certain extent in a simple style of worship. They appear to have resisted for some time the practice of clerical celibacy, auricular confession, and the doctrine of purgatory, and more than two sacraments. We know also that on certain points the British Church differed from the Roman custom, and adhered with great sturdiness to their own usages; but the points of difference can hardly be taken to indicate a freedom on the part of the British Church from ceremonial or sacerdotal religion, and retention of the primitive simplicity of Scriptural and spiritual Christianity, as the points for which the British Churchmen contended indicate the presence rather than the absence of the elements of a formal and deteriorated religion.

The fact is clear to any one who recognises the gradual deterioration of Christianity during the first five centuries of its history, that even the remote and independent British Church had fallen before the end of that time from the glory and brightness of its apostolic estate. The essentials of Catholic truth it still retained. The creeds it preserved inviolate. The universal episcopal order was its order, though the bishop and the presbyter, as in Iona, are said to have been

largely identical. It still had the two sacraments. The Canon of Holy Scripture was its rule of faith.

And yet in spite of all this an eclipse had passed over its religion.

The forms of religion, the rules and ceremonies of the Church, the power of the priest, the mystic value of the sacraments, were gradually superseding the essential matters of the inward and spiritual religion of the New Testament, and the simple way of salvation by grace through faith. The holy table was called the altar. The Holy Communion was termed the sacrifice of the altar. As the ages passed on the Eucharist was celebrated with greater pomp, and ceremony, and superstition. Tradition was gradually taking the place of the Holy Scripture, and the sacrificing priest that of the minister of Christ. Trifles were being more and more magnified ; fundamentals more and more ignored. Trivial points of ritual, and matters of church form usurped little by little the place of the great spiritual essentials. Ecclesiastics came to strive for points of ritual as if they were the fundamentals of the faith ; and contended earnestly, not so much for the faith once delivered to the saints as for the order and discipline determined by the Church. The secondaries were made of first importance ; the primaries became secondary.

And so it came to pass that the Church of Christ in Britain while strenuously rejecting the claims of the Bishop of Rome, and differing in certain points of ritual, was nevertheless in doctrine and teaching substantially the same as the Church of Rome. In point of fact, as one historian puts it, the religion of Britain and of Rome was essentially the same; in both the same tendency to superstition appears ; in

both Churches we have the worship of saints and relics, the sacrifice of the mass, asceticism, and work-righteousness. (Kurtz, "Ch. History," page 297.) The blasphemous and deceptive doctrine of the mass, with all its ensnaring falsities, was not yet fully developed, and many superstitious practices were still unheard of. But there were on every side evidences of the rudimentary growth of those sacerdotal doctrines and ritualistic practices which gradually obscured the truth of the Gospel of grace, and the reality of the Christian worship, and were destined in God's providence in a later age to be cast out of the Church of England.

VII. *An objection may be interposed here. It will be said: If this, then, is the case, what has become of the promise of Christ that His Holy Spirit should guide His followers into all truth, and that He would be with His disciples to the end of the age?*

The promise of the Spirit was most surely given and as certainly received. He came on the Day of Pentecost and filled the Christ-founded Church. He led the apostles into all truth. He guided them in their deliberative assemblies, and in their constitution of the primitive Church. He taught them the doctrines of grace, of justification, and sanctification, and the spiritual life. He fitted them by His supernatural power for the authorship of the inspired Scriptures. He directed them in their missionary labours.

It can be truly said of all the apostles' authoritative work, and all their written words, it was the work and the word of God the Holy Spirit.

But it was also as surely declared by the same most Holy Spirit, that after the departure of these

apostolic teachers a change would come over the Church. False doctrine would be taught in the very fold of the Church. False teaching would be promulgated, not by heretics without, but by heretics within the Catholic Church. "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts xx. 29, 30). Even before the end of the first century it was said of all them in Asia that they were turned away from the Apostle (2 Tim. i. 15); and the Revelation of St. John tells the same story of error within the Churches of his locality.

The promise of Christ has been surely fulfilled. He has been with His Church, and its life to-day is proof that Satan, with all the powers of hell, has not prevailed against it. But His presence in the Church was not destructive of the freedom of man. The mystery of the apostasy of popes and synods of the Catholic Church is no greater than the mystery of apostasy in the Churches of Galatia, and of error in the primate apostle. (Gal. ii. 11–14.) If, while the apostle lived, a Demas could be seduced by the love of the world, and a whole Church corrupted by its glory (2 Tim. iv. 10; Rev. iii. 14–17), it is not to be wondered at that, with worldly power and earthly pomp there should be a sad decline in doctrine and worship, and the disciples of Christ in the fifth and sixth centuries should adopt those beggarly elements of the pagan religion which were so fascinating in the first (Gal. iv. 9, 10).

And this is what came to pass.

The love of the world, and the desire of the eyes, and the pomp of life, seduced the Church from the

simplicity of its first love in doctrine and worship, Little by little the tide of seduction flowed in. Pagan rites were adopted. Heathen superstitions were borrowed. Bewitching ceremonies were practised. The splendour of the empire was emulated. Titles and ranks were assumed. Until at last the brotherhood became an oligarchy; the ministry an autocracy; the episcopate a despotism; the ministering presbyter the sacrificing priest; the holy table the altar; the communion the sacrifice; the bishop a dictator; the Pope of Rome a universal despot.

And yet it must be remembered that, in spite of all this, the Church was the body of Christ on earth. It was Christ's representative. The Church of Christ was a power for good. It restricted slavery. It abolished gladiatorship. It restrained polygamy. It elevated humanity. Even in its decline and decay the corruptions of the Church could not hinder the conquests of the Church.

VIII. *When it is said then that the Church of England at the Reformation restored the faith and religion of the primitive Church, are we to understand that it reverted to the doctrines and usages of the primitive British Church?*

When we speak of the primitive Church we are liable to confusion of thought.

If by the primitive Church we mean the Catholic Church of the third to the sixth century, it is certain that the Church of England looked further back than that. For the Church of England teaches very plainly in the twenty-first article, that even the authoritative utterances of the General Councils have contained error. There is a superstitious veneration on the part of some Anglican churchmen for these

centuries that amounts almost to idolatry. They forget that while these centuries were strong to resist heresy, they were weak to resist corruption; and that the very rubrics and Articles of the Church show that the Church of England was reformed by a purer standard than that of the post-Nicene and Nicene period.

But if by the primitive Church we mean the Church not of the post-Nicene, not of the post-apostolic, but of the apostolic age, the Church of the New Testament, the faith of which was the Word of God alone, it may be truly affirmed this is that primitive and apostolic Church which the Church of England, when it departed, as the great Bishop Jewel says, from the Church of Rome, selected as its standard. We have sought, says he in the conclusion of his famous Apology, the certain ways of religion out of the sacred Scriptures, which we know cannot deceive us, and have returned to the primitive Church of the ancient fathers and apostles, that is, to the first beginning and first rise, even to the very fountain head (Jewel's Works, Park. Soc., iii. 46).*

The practices and usages of none of the particular Churches of the primitive era can be adopted as the standard of apostolic faith in doctrine and worship. Though in different degrees they all admitted corruptions, and though all retained the creeds and acknowledged the general councils of the undivided Church, they were all tainted with the growing

* It may be said for the information of the Church student that the Apology of Bishop Jewel by the Queen's authority and the concurrence of the Bishops was recommended and considered as a true standard of the Church of England, and a copy of it was ordered to be placed in every parish Church in England and Wales.

tendency to hierarchism, and a semi-heathen ritualism.

When we say then that the Church of England at the Reformation reaffirmed the faith of the primitive Church, and reverted to the standard of the apostolic Church, it does not mean that the Church of England considered the ancient Church of Britain as its model and adopted and authorised all its usages. On the contrary, it distinctly asserted in the Nineteenth Article that the various portions of the primitive Catholic Church erred in doctrine, and that that only could be accepted as authoritative which is found in Holy Scripture. Scripture, therefore, and not the usages or traditions of the later Catholic Church, is the doctrinal standard of the Church of England (Arts. vi., viii., xxi.). And in so far as the early British Church adhered to the truth of the New Testament and the constitution of the apostolic Church, the Church of England reverted to that model. In its episcopal organisation and liturgical worship, and sole Scriptural authority and adhesion to the creeds, it was the ancestral model of the reformed English Church—but in no more.

IX. *But is not a common opinion with certain churchmen that the system which is called by the name of Popery is of comparatively modern introduction, and that with the exception of a few comparatively unimportant errors, the faith and discipline of the early Church was preserved for a thousand years?*

It is.

The opinion is a commonly received one, and has the authorization of many churchmen.* It is based

* *See* "Turning Points of English Church History," by E. L. Cutts, S. P.C.K., page 27.

apparently upon the theory that Popery is not a system of false doctrine, but merely the extremities of a system of so-called Catholic doctrine, and that there was no Popery in the Church until the acceptance of the dogma of transubstantiation and the declaration of the papal supremacy. But the theory is fallacious. Popery does not mean the mere extremities of Roman doctrine, for there can be Popery without the doctrine of transubstantiation, as there was Popery centuries before the Immaculate Conception and the Papal Infallibility were heard of. Nor does Popery involve the Papal supremacy, for in its true doctrinal acceptation there could be Popery in the independent Anglican Church, and there is Popery in the Oriental Church, and there has been for centuries.

According to its accurate historical meaning from the Anglican standpoint, Popery means that system of doctrine which began with the substitution of merit for faith, and ceremonial rites for spiritual worship; and found its culmination in apostate Latin Christianity, and apostate Greek Christianity, in the mass and the mass-priest, many centuries before the Reformation. Bishop Ridley ought to be considered a good authority by Anglican churchmen. According to Bishop Ridley, Popery is only another name for the whole trade of the Romish religion; the substance of the Romish religion, the common order, and the Romish laws and customs, which have been used in England, in the times past of Popery (Ridley's Works, Park. Soc., 57–66). And among the elements of "their Popery," he includes "the Popish sacrificing priest;" the mass books, and the holy loaves, "a very mockery of the Lord's Holy Table," lights, and

images, and idols, requiem masses, dirges and commendations, and such like trumpery of the anti-Christian religion (*ibid.*, 67). These, and a hundred things more of more weight, and of more evident superstition and idolatry, constitute in the mind of the great and scholarly Bishop Ridley, the substance of Popery. It is evident then that in the historical sense of the term Popery is no modern thing. It means a false system of Christianity. It began in the earliest ages with a departure from the simplicity of the apostolic faith and worship in the direction of sacerdotalism, priestcraft, and ceremonialism; was well developed in the seventh century, more strongly developed in the eleventh century, and from the twelfth century onwards was full blown and mature. Popery is no modern word. And what it meant to Ridley and Latimer—viz., the Romish system of religion, it means to-day, only that now the system has added one or two additional errors, the Papal Infallibility and the Immaculate Conception.

In fine, the position of the early English Church was one of commingled good and evil. Sound in the creeds, and, in the theoretical exaltation of Scripture as its standard, it had not yet permitted in their fulness a multitude of those debasing superstitions that afterwards defiled the Church's faith and worship. But on the other hand, there were only too manifestly present the germs and first beginnings of most dangerous errors. Practices without warrant of Scripture were being gradually introduced. The holy table was universally called the altar. The holy communion was commonly termed the offering of the sacrifice, in the sense of its being an unbloody repetition of the Sacrifice of Christ, and the idea of

the mass and masses was already in view (Kurtz, i. 229). And in fact, the fundamental principle of Popery, the parent of all the corruptions of medievalism, the root and source of all its errors, the substitution of tradition, and human authority for the Divine Word was everywhere accepted, and was already working as a leaven in the body of the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER III.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH FROM THE AGE OF AUGUSTINE TO THAT OF THEODORE.

The English Church from the time of Augustine to Theodore—The Augustine founded Church identical with the Church of Rome—The destruction of the British Church by the Angles and Saxons—England a heathen country when Augustine landed—Augustine sent by the Bishop of Rome—Roman Christianity established in England—The brief duration of Augustine's work—England evangelised from Lindisfarne—The character of Aidan's Christianity—Celtic churchmanship submerged in Roman at the Whitby Conference—Deusdedit Wighard, and Theodore—The Church of England unified by Theodore—The Parochial System—The loss of English Church Independence—Theodore refuses the validity of British orders—All with British orders to be reconsecrated, and reordained—Latin Language, and auricular confession introduced—The sacrifice of the mass.

WE are now come to a memorable era in the history of the English Church, the period of the mission of Augustine.

For the historical details the reader is referred to one or more of the standard writers on the history of the Church of England in the list at the end of this work (*see* Appendix).

We will resume our argument by an important question.

X. *If the early British Church on account of its isolation may be said to have been independent in a measure of Rome, was not the religion of the Church in England from the end of the sixth century onward practically identical with the religion of the Church of Rome?*

There can be but one answer to this question.

So far as doctrine, discipline, and worship are concerned it is indisputable that the Church of England at that time, and for centuries afterwards was, to all intents and purposes, substantially identical with the Church of Rome.

Of course, in speaking of this period, the term, Church of England, is used merely for convenience. Strictly speaking there was no England, and no Church of England till some time later.

We have stated above, that there was little or no difference in doctrine in any of the Churches in the fifth or sixth centuries of the Christian era. There were small divergences in the non-essential points of their ecclesiastical systems, such as the date of Easter, and the methods of tonsure and baptismal immersion, but these were of minor consideration. They were matters of mere detail.

The historical records of that era furnish us with nothing to show that there was any serious difference in doctrine or worship amongst the orthodox branches of the Catholic Church.

After the mission of the Roman Augustine, A.D. 597, this was still more evident.

For it must be remembered that from the middle of the fifth to the end of the sixth centuries, in round numbers from A.D. 450 to 600, a great change was witnessed in England. The Church of Christ had practically perished from the land. The religion of Christ was gone. There was no Church. There were no churches. There were no Christians.

The Jutes, and the Angles, and the Saxons, heathen all, had taken possession of England, and as the Israelites of old they had either exterminated the

inhabitants, or driven them utterly from the country. The only Christians in the kingdom were pushed into the corners of Cornwall and Wales where the struggling Christianity of early Britain remained as in a fastness.

In the year 597, with the exception of a small strip in the north and south of the western border, England was as truly a heathen land as the centre of China is to-day. It had no church, no creed, no Christians, and the Christianity of even the remnant was, according to Geldas, of a very degraded type (Bright, pp. 28, 29). It was to this reheathenized kingdom that the then Bishop of Rome dispatched his missionaries, and if we are to speak of a Church being planted there, the Church that was then planted in England by the Roman monk Augustine was beyond all question a branch of the Church of Rome.

It is true that the faith of Christ is a greater matter than the name of any Church, and these first Kentish converts were not baptized in the name of Augustine, or Gregory, or of the Pope of Rome. They were not even baptized into the Church of Rome. They were baptized in the Triune name into the Church of Christ. It was Christ to whom they gave their allegiance, not to any man; and it was into Christ they were baptized, and His name they bore.

But if we speak of the organized and corporate religion introduced into England at this time by the Italian mission, we can only term it rightly the religion of Rome.

Augustine was sent by the Bishop or Pope of Rome. He was ordained Bishop some time after by the Archbishop of Arles, at the instance of the

Bishop or Pope of Rome (Perry, "Eng. Ch. Hist.," i. 24), and as Gregory himself stated, by his authorization (*ibid.*, page 26). It was by the Bishop or the Pope of Rome that he was appointed the first Archbishop of Canterbury, and he received the pallium from the Pope in token of his metropolitan dignity. This pallium, moreover, was to be regarded not only as the seal of this newly conferred primacy, but as the sign also of the establishment of that hierarchical system of Christianity which Rome was then delighting to establish.

All the baptized Christians of England, the result of this mission, were under the jurisdiction of Rome, and the members of the Church of which Augustine was the founder were committed to his care by the authority of the Pope of Rome. And it goes without saying, the doctrine and worship they introduced, was, of course, the doctrine and worship of the Church of Rome. The missionaries despatched from Gregory to Augustine, 601, brought with them the articles that were considered of necessity in the worship and service of the Church, and a very fair idea of what kind of a service and what kind of a worship that was, may be gathered from the list of these articles. There were sacred vessels for the altar, and altar vestments ; ornaments for the churches, and vestments for the priests and clerks ; and relics of the apostles and martyrs. Holy water, too, was in use, for Gregory advised Augustine not to destroy the heathen temples but to utilize them as Christian Churches after sprinkling them with holy water (Perry, i. 27). It was, in one word, the Romish religion in its early development.

XI. *But was not the Christianity introduced by*

Augustine of mere temporary existence, and did not the Church he established almost disappear within a few years?

True.

The success of the Italian mission was for a while phenomenal. It spread with great rapidity, and in little more than a quarter of a century the Christian Church had been established in four of the seven Saxon kingdoms.

But it was only a mushroom growth at best. It vanished almost as quickly as it came. In some cases when the king died by whose influence the faith was brought in, the whole nation reverted to paganism. It is not an uncommon thing for Romish converts to return to the worship of their idols, as the history of Roman missions in Africa and China, and Japan, has proved again and again. And this was the case in England.

Though the Pope appointed Laurentius as the successor of Augustine, and afterwards sent the pallium to Paulinus the first Archbishop of York, the south and the north in turn restored the gods of heathenism, and the Church of Christ was well-nigh annihilated. In Kent alone, and there with difficulty, the faith of Christ was preserved in the Church.

To our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, in the beginning of the seventh century, the apostolic remonstrance might truly be applied: "Now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again. Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years."

XII. *Was England then left long without a Church, a ministry, and a sign of the Christian faith?*

No.

The faith of Christ that failed from the south now gained a foothold from the north, and from Lindisfarne England was evangelised once more. Lindisfarne, a small island on the coast of Northumberland, became the home of a Christian communion that had come from Iona, and it is an apostolical ancestry of which any Church may be proud.

For the faith that was brought by Aidan from the English Holy Isle had been handed down from the missionary monk Columba of Scottish Iona, who, in his time, had been trained by the Welsh Churchman Finian and had brought the Christian faith from Ireland, where it had been spread through the zeal of St. Patrick. The type of Christianity that was now introduced into England, and for the latter part of the first half of the seventh century obtained in the greater part of the north and middle of England, was of British not of Romish origin. It represented the ecclesiastical system of the Celtic Church.

As we have seen above, it does not follow from this that England, at this time, came into possession of a pure and perfect form of apostolical Christianity, for in all things save a few minor details, the Celtic and the Romish religions were then practically the same.

But then there was a difference, and it is important that we should note it.

Broadly speaking, the Christianity of Aidan was of a simpler and more primitive type.

It seems to have been animated by a more spiritual and evangelical fervour. Aidan's object was not so much the extension of an ecclesiastical system as the preaching of the Word of God ("Con-

fluebant ad audiendum verbum Dei populi gaudentes" Bede, "Ecc. Hist.," lib. iii. cap. iii.).

The longing desire of Aidan was breathed in his ejaculation :—"If Thy love, O my Saviour, is offered to this people, many hearts will be touched. I will go and make Thee known."

Its worship and ritual were modelled, not on the Roman, but on the Celtic system, which was of Gallican and of Oriental origin ; and the differences, though trivial, were very stubbornly maintained by the British Churchmen. It was, in fact, of a very independent character.

Its individualism is quite pronounced. Its difference from the Roman hierarchical system was a clear proof of its independent origin ; and its resistance of the Roman claims a clear evidence of its primitive liberty, and an early expression of the anti-Papal spirit that was afterwards one of the conspiring causes of the reformation of the Church of England.

XIII. *Did this Celtic or British type of Christianity, introduced by Aidan, become the Christianity of England, and is it historically accurate to assert that the Church of England represented, on account of the Lindisfarne Mission, a somewhat independent system of ritual and of doctrine ?*

Though it is frequently assumed by English writers that this is the case, a careful inquiry will show that this question must be answered in the negative.

For this reason.

The Celtic or British type of churchmanship was not of long duration.

Running side by side, teaching the same Church truth, and differing only on points of insignificant detail, the Celtic and Roman clergy were continually

coming into conflict concerning trifling points of ritual and order. The differences, though trivial, were annoying. No little ill-feeling was engendered, and though the matter was of such inferior interest as the date of Easter, it was quite strong enough to create a serious faction. Nothing, after all, has so divided the Church of Christ as ritual and interpretation. It is generally in matters of ceremony and the meaning of terms that Churches differ. Men fight far more seriously for the symbols and shadows of religion than they do for the essence and substance of religion.

And so it came to pass that a conference was held in 664, at Whitby, to hear the claims of the rival systems. Colman of Lindisfarne, represented the old British Church custom. Wilfred, a tutor of King Oswy's son, was spokesman for the party of the Church of Rome. Both parties urged their arguments with vehemence and skill. But the rough-and-ready eloquence of Wilfred prevailed. "Columba may have been a good man, but he was not to be compared to St. Peter. St. Peter kept the keys." The argument sufficed the illiterate king. He at once admitted the claims of Peter. The British custom was disallowed, and gradually fell into disuse. The Roman use was authorised, and became the custom of the realm.

Thus, through a question of paltry ritual, and by an argument at once sophistical and trivial, the peculiarity of surviving British churchmanship was abandoned, and the rule of the ancient Church relinquished.

The Church of Rome conquered.

In ritual, as in doctrine, the churchmanship of Aidan and Colman was submerged in that of Rome.

In less than ten years the Roman use was adopted throughout the realm, and though scattered adherents of the ancient British Church order lingered, with stubborn conservatism, in parts of Wales, and Scotland, and Ireland, within a century and a-half the ritual of the Church of Rome was observed throughout the whole of the land.

It must be remembered, moreover — we have pointed this out before, but it is of importance—that the differences between the Church of Lindisfarne, if we may so describe the representative Celtic or British Church in the seventh century, and the Church of Rome were questions of ecclesiastical detail, such as the tonsure and the date of Easter. There were then no serious differences of doctrine. There were no serious differences in ritual. Both maintained the Romish system of religion. Both held the same theory of the priestly office. In both the priest celebrated the sacrifice of the mass upon the altar. In both were found orders of monks and nuns. In both lights were used, images worshipped, saints invoked, relics sold, the eastward position adopted. The only difference of any significance, was the question of episcopal authority referred to before, and the real issue of the Whitby Conferences was this :—

The small and unimportant differences that distinguished those churchmen in England who conservatively adhered to the customs of the primitive Celtic Church completely disappear. The Church in England became practically the same as the Church of Rome.

The dangers that resulted from ecclesiastical division were at an end. Ecclesiastical union and

ecclesiastical uniformity were gained. But the peace was purchased at the price of Roman victory. The union then gained was union with Rome. The uniformity then secured was the uniformity of Rome. As more than one Church historian has pointed out, the result of that conference was the subjection of the Church in England to the Roman confession (Perry, i. 54; Kurtz, 302).

XIV. *After the Conference of Whitby what happened?*

After the Conference at Whitby the tide of Roman pre-eminence seems to have slowly, but surely, set in over the land. The prestige of the most famous See in Western Christendom was daily increasing, and the eyes of all England were turning to the Pope. The Anglo-Saxon party, which was the Roman party (Kurtz, "Ch. Hist.," p. 303), like the house of David of old, waxed stronger and stronger; while the British party, like Saul's house of old, waxed weaker and weaker, even in Scotland, and Ireland, and Iona.

Deusdedit, the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury, having died in 664, King Oswy of Northumbria joined with the King of Kent in submitting to the Pope of Rome the question of another Archbishop of Canterbury. It must be remembered that Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, was not only sent from Rome, but received the pallium or pall which invested him with the title of Archbishop, or Metropolitan of the Angles, from the Bishop or Pope of Rome. It was natural, then, that they should have sent the man who was selected to be his successor in 664, to the Pope of Rome to be consecrated. This man — Wighard by name — died, however, before the Pope could consecrate him.

It was also very natural, then, that Oswy, not caring to take the risk or trouble of sending another Englishman, should have asked the Pope to select a man himself, and consecrate him in Rome as Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Pope did so.

The man chosen was Theodore, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen, like St. Paul himself, of no mean city. He was a learned and vigorous man, of strong convictions and great personal force. And, selected by the Pope of Rome, and consecrated by the Pope of Rome, he was sent by the Pope of Rome to be Archbishop of Canterbury, the Metropolitan See of Southern England, with instructions not to introduce anything contrary to the true faith in the Church, as the manner of the Greek is. That is, he was to be sure and give them Roman ritual and doctrine.

XV. *It was during the time of Theodore, was it not, that the Church in England is said to have become one national Church, or what we now call the Church of England?*

Yes.

It was to Theodore that the unification of the various Churches is owing, and the adoption of uniformity in ecclesiastical custom (Stubbs, i. 218–225).

After his arrival in England in 669 he visited every part of the country; and, four years after, gathered the bishops and clergy in council together at Hertford. A book of ten canons was produced, and accepted by those present. It is generally agreed by Church historians that this organised action of English bishops and clergy marks the foundation movement of the Church in England as the Church of England.

Theodore then began his scheme of organization in earnest. He enlarged the episcopate. He marked off new dioceses. He infused new life into the Church. Churches were everywhere built. Clergy were provided for the newly built churches. New districts for parochial services were defined, and new parishes marked out.

Up to this time our modern parochial system was unknown. Here and there throughout England, at scattered intervals, there were oratories, or rude buildings, built for prayer, and services were held in them by the monks and travelling missionary clergy. There were monasteries too throughout the land, and the monks celebrated services which the people could attend. But, in our modern sense of the word there were no parish churches, and no parish clergy; and without a settled, regular pastorate, the great work of the Christian Church was impossible.

Theodore inaugurated a different system.

He taught the people to build churches. He marked out parochial districts in each episcopate. He conceived the idea of having a church in each parish, and a pastor in each church (*ibid.*, i. 224–227). It was perhaps only an ideal. For some years afterwards the parish clergy were little more than the private chaplains of some great man, and their congregations his retainers. But still a different plan was inaugurated. The observance of Sunday was commenced, and that system of regular parochial provision was instituted which we now call the parochial system of the Church of England. It was still, however, in a rudimentary state of development, the system not being perfected till some time after (Green, i. 59).

XVI. *When we say that under Theodore the Church became the organized Church of the land, are we to understand by this that the religious system of the Church of England in those days was different from that of the Church of Rome?*

By no means.

During Theodore's primacy the scattered members of the Christian Church in the various principalities of the land became welded together. A principle of unity was infused. United action began. A period of independence and separationism passed away. A national Church in a very real sense had arisen. A leader by instinct, and an organiser by training. Archbishop Theodore performed a work of lasting power, and gave to the English Church that proverbial strength that comes from unity.

But the unity, again, was not the unity of independence. The union that Theodore secured was Roman union.

There was now, indeed, a united Church in the land that afterwards will be known as England. It was the organized and united Church of the land. There was no other Church. There was no other order. Its ritual, its order, its forms, its worship, its rule, its doctrine, were the only rule and ritual known. And yet that Church had become one only by the forfeiture of British Church independence. Its unity had been secured only by the relinquishment of all that was distinctive of the once independent British Church.

It is right for English churchmen to boast of the independence of the Church of England before the Reformation, for its independence during centuries was an historical fact. But at the same time another important fact must not be overlooked. That the

independence and primitive liberty which the Church in England did enjoy prior to Augustine's advent, and in a limited measure during the time of Aidan and his work, was completely and hopelessly surrendered first at the Council of Whitby in 664, and afterwards during the archiepiscopate of Theodore from 669 to 687. (Bright, 232–272.)

The very first canon of the Council at Hertford, that council that marks the first united action of the English Church, was the formal establishment of a rule that was notoriously the symbol of Roman triumph, the acceptance of the Roman method of keeping Easter. A trifle in itself, it was a straw on the stream that showed the abdication of the ancient rule of the British Church.

But the things that followed were not so trifling.

We are amazed to think that at so remote a date even Rome's haughty spirit would dare so much.

Theodore, with the characteristic effrontery of a Roman hierarch, began with questioning the validity of British orders.

There was to be no evasion ; no exception. Everyone everywhere, must yield. Even the bishops who had been consecrated by the Scots of Britons were not to be admitted to the functions of their office without the imposition of the hands of a Catholic bishop (Perry, "Eng. Ch. Hist.," i. 60). That is, of course—Rome's effrontery again—a Roman Catholic bishop.

And Rome carried the day.

Theodore insisted on the necessity of ordination by bishops who in an unbroken chain could trace back their authority to the apostles themselves. The British still maintained the validity of their consecra-

tion ; but the best men were sometimes the first to yield. Cedda, or Chad, who had been consecrated by a bishop who had received his orders from the elders of Iona, was met with the words : " You have not been regularly ordained." On Chad's meekly offering to resign, Theodore replied : " No, you shall remain a bishop, but I will consecrate you anew, according to the Catholic ritual " (D'Aubigné, " Hist. Reform," v. 52 ; Bright, 236–238).

It is of importance to note that Theodore's action was afterwards upheld by a council of the English Church.

The fifth canon of the Council of Chelsea, held in A.D. 816, ordains that the Scoti (Scotch or Irish priests) should not be allowed to minister, as their orders were uncertain (Perry, " Eng. Ch. Hist.," i. 92).

Another of Rome's favourite practices was now enforced, the rebaptizing of those whose baptism was doubtful ; a thing that was doubtless made much of to disparage the virtue of the ancient sacramental acts of the British clergy (*ibid.*).

Another of the distinctive marks of the ancient independent Church of England was the worship of God in the language of the people, as the Church now teaches in Art. xxiv.

" It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church to have public prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understanded of the people." This too must be abandoned. The Latin tongue was enjoined as the language of public worship (" Ecc. Ang.," p. 46). Rome's use became the rule of the Church in England.

Another thing, too, that distinguished the early

British Church from the Church of Rome, was its ignorance of the recently developed and the dangerous practice of auricular confession (Kurtz, page 298), the stronghold of the hierarchal system, and the central citadel of sacerdotal Christianity, or Popery.

In this particular the distinctiveness of England's ancient faith disappeared, and the English Church was swept into the current of Roman innovation.

"Theodore introduced that potent instrument of clerical power—the practice of auricular confession—which was unknown in England before his time." (Perry, i. 60.)

And last, and most ominous of all, the Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper, was no more administered according to the simple order of the primitive Church but throughout all the Church of England the sacrifice of the mass was offered by the priest, after the Roman fashion of the day. The simple presbyter of the ancient British Church became the sacrificing priest of the Church of Rome (D'Aubigné, v. 29, *cf.* "Ecclesia Anglicana," p. 46). The priest of the Church of England was not ordained, as in the Church of England now, with authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy sacraments; he was ordained to offer sacrifice and to celebrate mass, as well for the living as the dead ("Ecc. Ang.," p. 46). It is sad to think of these things. It is humiliating to think of the defection of the successors of Aidan, and Colman, and Columba, and Patrick, but we repeat that it is impossible for any one who candidly admits the consequences of the conference of Whitby, and the Council of Hertford and the primacy of Theodore, to deny that Roman ritual, Roman customs, Roman orders, as well as Roman doctrine, became at that

time the order of the English Church. The kingdom had become ecclesiastically one, but the bond wherewith it is bound was the uniformity of Rome.

XVII. *But did the English Church teach transubstantiation, and other distinctly Roman doctrines?*

No. That is, not in the modern sense.

Nor did the Church of Rome at that time. The Church of Rome at that time held what would now be termed very advanced doctrine with regard to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the theory of transubstantiation was not only received as a scholastic dogma, but really understood so by the people. Under Cæsarius of Arles, and Gregory the Great the doctrine of the sacrifices of masses, so vigorously denounced by the Church of England now (Art. xxxi.), was clearly set forth, and the Lord's Supper, and the Holy Communion of the apostles' time became an atoning sacrifice, often partaken of by the priest alone, and of sacrificial efficacy for the living, and the dead (Kurtz, i. 229). But the dogma of transubstantiation was not defined canonically until the year 1215.

At the same time, the thing, the reality, the essence of the mass sacrifice was there, and was as different from the present teaching and practice of the Church of England as possible. The administration of the Lord's Supper in the Church of England now is a communion, not a sacrifice.* It is illegal to have a celebration of the Lord's Supper without a certain number of communicants.

* Of course there is no reference here to the obvious fact that in the communion service of the Church of England there is the sacrifice of our gifts to the poor, "our alms and oblations," of our "praise and thanksgiving," and of ourselves, our souls and bodies, but simply to the

But the central idea of the Romish system, the offering of Christ by the priest, was rapidly gaining ground, and the communion was being transformed into a ritualistic ceremony of efficacious merit for the living and dead, to be performed by "the sacrificing priest," and to be witnessed by the people.

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fact that the Church of England now clearly rejects the Romish idea of a propitiatory oblation in the Eucharist, according to the teaching of Art. xxxi., and the first part of the Homily concerning the Sacrament. "We must then take heed, lest, of the memory, it be made a sacrifice."

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELATION OF THE EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH TO THE CHURCH OF ROME.

The term Protestant—Two senses in which it is employed—The spirit of Protestant independence in the British Church—The protests of Dionoth and Wigornia—The protest of Theodore against Wilfrid—Various views of this matter—It cannot be considered as a protest of the English Church against Rome—The position of the Church of England towards Rome from the eighth to the sixteenth century.

WE now pass to the discussion of a point that is opened up by the previous paragraph. It is one of great importance, and the reader is requested to carefully consider the statements that are made, and the positions advanced, as a correct understanding of the history of the Church of England in its entirety depends upon their intelligent comprehension.

XVIII. *In what sense, then, are we to understand the assertions of various Church writers that the Church of England at this time, and for centuries afterwards, was practically speaking a Protestant Church, and independent of the Church of Rome?*

To answer this question it will be necessary to make a brief inquiry into the meaning of that much misunderstood term Protestant, and clearly understand the sense in which it should be used in the Church of England.

What is a Protestant?

Etymologically, a Protestant is simply one who protests; that is one who makes a formal declaration in opposition to some person or something. The act of protest is in the first place the declaration of formal dissent or difference, and in the next place a remonstrance or protest against the doctrine or person differed from. Ecclesiastical protest, of course, is the protest of a Church. It is the protest of an ecclesiastical organization against some person or some other organization, and it involves two things.

First, A differing from a doctrine, person, or organization, in which and with which the protesting Church has a serious and immediate interest. *Second*, And on account of that interest and relation, a distinct and formal remonstrance against some doctrine that is held or some claim that is made, and the person or system that makes it or holds it.

Broadly speaking, every Church is more or less a Protestant Church, the Roman Church not being excluded. Strictly speaking, the Catholic Church of Christ has from the first been truly Protestant, the history of its Councils being the history of its Protestantism.

But as we shall presently see, the word Protestant has acquired a peculiarity of meaning which is quite different from these broad uses of the term, and in this unique and distinctly modern meaning of the word neither the primitive Church nor the Church of Rome could be called by the name.

The peculiar meaning which is now correctly attached to the word Protestant has much, if not altogether, to do with doctrines and claims of the Church of Rome.

In the modern sense of the word—for it is really a modern term—a Protestant Church is one that protests against the claims of the Church of Rome; the claim of the Church of Rome to be Mother and Mistress of all the Churches, and the truly Catholic Church of Christ; and the claim of the Pope of Rome to dominate kingdoms and thrones. But even more than that. A Protestant Church is one that protests against the distinctive doctrinal system of the Church of Rome; and protests not so much against one or two of its extreme doctrines, as against the whole body of sacerdotal, and ceremonial, and traditional religion as opposed to the Scriptural, reformed, or evangelical system (Ridley, Works, Parker Soc., p. 57).

In its strict ecclesiastical usage, therefore, the word has come to acquire two different meanings, the failure to distinguish which has caused no little confusion.

It may be used, in the one sense, to designate a mere ecclesiastical or political protest against the pretensions and claims of the Church or of the Pope of Rome, a protest that necessarily has nothing to do with any doctrines or customs of the Church protesting.

It may be used in the other to designate an entire dissent from Rome's system of religion, and the affirmation of a completely opposite body of doctrine. For Protestantism in its true meaning is not merely a negative protest against Rome's errors; it is the solemn affirmation and establishment of Scriptural truth, that is, the teaching of Christ and His apostles. When we say, then, that a Church is or was a Protestant Church, we must in all fairness state exactly what we mean by Protestantism. Is it to be

taken as meaning this political or ecclesiastical and non-doctrinal protest against the Pope's claim to supremacy; or is it to be taken in the sense of the affirmation of the reformed or evangelical system of doctrine as opposed to that complex sacerdotal ceremonial system of doctrine which is properly designated Popery. Or is it to be used as implying both?

Unless we fully grasp these distinctive meanings of the word, and see how at one time the Church in England was merely Protestant in the first sense, and at a later time Protestant in the second sense also, we shall certainly fail to understand the history of the Church of England.

To resume our question.

If it be asked if the Church in England during the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries in the doctrinal sense of the word was a Protestant Church, the answer must be given in the negative.

Not only was the word in its present sense unknown, that is, in the evangelical and Reformation sense—but the very idea was unconceived so far as the difference between sacerdotalism and evangelical Christianity is concerned. Neither in any formal document, nor in her liturgy, had the English Church one declaration of opposition to the Church of Western Christendom of which she was an integral part.

But though the Church in England in the modern Reformation sense was not a Protestant Church, it is not to be assumed, therefore, that there was nothing to protest against. Every addition to the teaching of Christ and His apostles, and every contradiction to the simple and spiritual worship of the primitive Church, constituted a proper ground for protest.

But the Church was unawake, and unawakened to the necessity of remonstrance because ignorant of the truth, and unconscious of difference.

Not for some centuries will the Church of England be awakened by the Spirit of God to the perception of the pure doctrine of Christ and His apostles, and put forth as its teaching that great body of evangelical doctrine which is fundamentally opposed to Rome's system of religion. In the doctrinal sense the Church of England will not be Protestant till the sixteenth century.

If, on the other hand, it be asked if the Church in England during these centuries offered any resistance to the claims and pretensions of popes and papal legates, the answer is different. Of this kind of Protestantism there are many traces. There are, as we shall presently show, a number of instances of brave opposition to the Pope and his novel demands.

Strictly speaking, though, it can hardly be said that the Church, as a whole, even in these early centuries, was independent in this sense of Rome. As we have said before, there was no organised or national Church in England prior to the days of Theodore, so that it is impossible that any such character or designation as Protestant would be given to the Church as a whole. It is questionable whether the word could even partly be applied to any of the primitive sections of the Church in the modern sense. Many of these protests were individual, not formally ecclesiastical, or synodal. But there was in the Church the spirit of Protestantism and of British independence ; and from the earliest days there are instances of resistance on the part of English Churchmen to the arrogance of Rome.

The struggles of Augustine's ecclesiastical predecessors are the first proofs of this sort of Protestantism in the British Church.

These simple Churchmen of Bangor knew nothing of the papal supremacy; and the answer of Dionoth to the first claim of the papacy ever heard in England was the first instance of that intolerance of Rome which long afterwards culminated in the Reformation. When the Roman churchman said curtly to them: "Acknowledge the authority of the Bishop of Rome," he received, instead of a pliant submission, the memorable answer: "The Pope has no right to call himself the father of fathers, and we are only prepared to give him that obedience to which every Christian is entitled."

The British Church trumpet gave no uncertain sound.

The protest of Wigornia in 601, when the ancient British Church resisted through its leaders the next piece of Roman extravagance, was just as firm. With the courage of conviction, they denied the right of Rome to ask their allegiance. They denied that the Church of Rome had any right to question their orders. They refused to submit alike to the arrogance of the Romans, or the tyranny of the Saxons. According to Bede's story, they resisted a third time, when the Roman legate sat proudly in his seat as the British Bishops advanced into the Council hall. An old hermit had told them that if Augustine comported himself with humility they were to submit to him, but if he did not rise to receive them they ought to beware. Augustine did not rise, but remained sitting. This piece of pride was enough. They knew that it was not the sign of the Meek and Lowly One,

nor was the yoke that this new-comer sought to impose the yoke of Christ. Firmly and finally, they refused to yield, in spite of the threats of the haughty Roman. (The story is told in Bede's "Ecc. Hist.," lib. ii. cap. ii.).

But these acts of protest had little or nothing to do with doctrine. Nor can they in any sense be brought forward as proofs of the early doctrinal purity of the British branch of the Catholic Church, and of its freedom from Romish superstitions, for, as we have seen, the trivial points of difference prove their practical identity in the great body of Church teaching and practice. They are simply proofs of the primitive liberty of the British Church in its independence of Roman jurisdiction, and also of the sturdy spirit of national Protestantism that, even at that early date, was to be found in the Churchmen of the British Isles. But that is all.

XIX. *But is there not an instance of resistance to Rome on the part of the Church of England during Theodore's days, and is it not a proof that the Church of England as a whole was in a certain sense a Protestant Church at that time?*

The affair of Wilfrid is commonly noted as a proof of the independence of the Church in England during Theodore's days. Wilfrid, as Bishop of York, was brought into conflict with Theodore on the questions of the autocratic division of his diocese and the king's new wife, and the archbishop and the king united to depose and banish him. Wilfrid carried his appeal to the Pope, and arrived in Rome in 679. Pope Agatho and his council decided, it appears, in his favour. "But Theodore and Egfrith disregarded the anathema against all, whoever they might be, who

should attempt to infringe the decree; and the Pope made no attempt to enforce it. Here is the first open resistance of the English Church to the authority of Rome."

It is hardly safe, however, to assert that Theodore's treatment of Wilfrid and the decree of the Pope in his behalf in 680, can be taken as a proof of the position of the English Church at the time.

There can be no doubt that Wilfrid of York was a very troublesome sort of a man; an ecclesiastic always in hot water. He was certainly a proud and haughty prelate, a typical Roman autocrat, the last man in the world to brook dictation. There can be no doubt also that Theodore was jealous of him, and was not a little afraid of the growing power of the Northern See. So when, as was natural on being deprived of his See, Wilfrid carried his grievance to Rome, and came back in proud possession of the Pope's decree, it was only natural that Theodore, on his part, should ignore it. Rome-appointed though he was, he desired to be Cæsar in his own dominion; so he summoned his council, and condemned Wilfrid to imprisonment in spite of Pope Agatho and his rule.

The reader will thus perceive that it is scarcely exact to call this an open resistance on the part of the English Church to the authority of Rome, as Smith does in his account of the matter ("Students' Ecc. Hist.," p. 514).

It was a resistance of Rome; a very strong and out-spoken resistance. It indicated a decided spirit of independence of the Italian. And yet when we speak of the open resistance of the English Church to the authority of Rome, we are in danger of asserting

something much more momentous than this action really indicated.

Again this matter of Wilfrid was largely a personal matter. It was mixed up, too, with political matters, and Egfrith the king, who had a quarrel on hand with Wilfrid too, was involved in it. It was the policy of the English kings, at that time, to fight with all their might against Rome's policy of creating another Metropolitan See in the North, as a kind of offset against the primacy of Canterbury in the South. The pontiff dreaded the concentration of ecclesiastical power in one primate. But the creation of another arch-episcopate would counterbalance his power, and keep them both in proper submission. It was Rome's old policy, divide and conquer.

On the other hand, from the king's standpoint, it was of the utmost importance that nothing should be allowed to endanger the political unity of the heptarchy. And this the growing power of the See of York seemed to do (Kurtz, i. 328). When we read, therefore, between the lines, and see how much Egfrith the king had to do with this resistance to Wilfrid, we must regard the matter in a personal, rather than in a national-ecclesiastical light.

Canon Perry takes a different view of the matter altogether. So far from describing the Wilfrid affair as a grand demonstration of the Protestantism of the English Church, he points out that it was a mere question of Episcopal jurisdiction, and the principles that were to govern the divisions of dioceses, and quotes a note to the effect that one Church authority holds that the papal decree, so far from being in favour of Wilfrid, was actually in favour of Theodore ("Students' Eng. Ch. Hist.," i. 64).

Taking, then, the whole matter into consideration, we can only come to the conclusion that while the action of Theodore and Egfrith indicated, in all probability, a strong national sentiment, it can hardly be accepted as a proof of the fact that, in the latter part of the seventh century, the Church in England, as a Church, was in a state of healthy ecclesiastical independence, and conscientiously defiant of the authority of the Pope of Rome.

XX. *How then are we to describe the position of the Church of England as regards the Church of Rome from this time, or from the beginning of the eighth century onwards to the sixteenth?*

The answers to this question in the minds of many English Churchmen have been various.

In the opinion of many the Church of England during this time was absolutely and slavishly Roman. In the opinion of others the Church was thoroughly independent, a national Church whose uses and teaching and ecclesiastical life were essentially distinguishable from those of Rome. The first opinion gives no room for the idea of any independence on the part of England's Church. The second none for any identity with the Church of Rome.

Now the truth lies between these two opinions; or rather in a combination of them. Each of them has a part of the truth, but, in each of them, the suppression of the other part of the truth has been the creation of that which is false. The whole truth consists in a reasonable union of both.

The Church of England was, during these centuries, essentially and at times slavishly Roman.

But it was mainly so, and for centuries only so, in the doctrinal sense. And it was only so in the doc-

trinal sense, practically and substantially. In the great body of sacerdotal or Romish doctrine, in the great system of sacerdotal or Romish worship, the Church of England was one throughout this period with the Church of Rome. Rome's priests were her priests; Rome's altars her altars; Rome's teaching her teaching; and its bishops and archbishops were largely appointees of Rome. In trivial details, such as the colour of a stole, the shape of a cross, or petty items of the ritual of the mass, there were doubtless divergencies. But what we now call the Romish religion, or popery, or the religion of Rome, was throughout this period the religion of England's Church, and as we show later on, towards the latter part of this era, many who tried to teach then what is now the doctrine of the Church of England were burnt by the Church as heretics.

The Church of England was, during a part at least of these centuries, an independent and national Church. But it was only so in the political or national ecclesiastical sense; it was never really so in the spiritual or in the doctrinal. Whatever independence and nationality there was always a matter of rule and governance, of appeals and appointments, of statutes and ordinances. There were times, indeed, as we shall see, when it became a mere appendage of Rome. At certain periods the domination of Rome was slavishly acknowledged. Yet for all that there was throughout these centuries a strong sense of independence in the English Church, and ever and anon, a healthy show of defiance.

But there is no trace of any difference from Romish doctrine on the part of the Church of England. The men who dared to be independent in this respect

were promptly burnt, or sternly condemned as heretics. The propagation of such Church teaching as that contained in Articles vi., xxii., xxviii., and xxxi., would have been considered during some of the pre-Reformation centuries false doctrine, heresy, and schism.

The independence was merely ecclesiastico-national.

The history of the Church of England, during these eight centuries, is the history of a Romanized national Church, out of which from time to time came protests against the encroachments of Rome and the imposition of the papal supremacy, and in which were uttered and promulgated the germs and beginning of those Scriptural and spiritual and evangelical doctrines which were, at the time of the Reformation, so signally to distinguish her from the Church of Rome. But these protests were either individual, and therefore unrepresentative of the Church; or they were politico-ecclesiastical, and had consequently nothing to do with doctrine.

On the other hand these spiritual and evangelical doctrines were the opinions of isolated individuals, who in no wise represented the sentiment of the Church people of the realm, or they were the views of individual ecclesiastics, such as Grosseteste or Wycliffe, that could by no means be taken as the teaching of the Church.

It is this intensely interesting period which is now to be reviewed, and we propose to show how little by little that sturdy spirit of insular patriotism which, from the earliest era animated the minds of English churchmen, asserted itself with growing force, until the protests of individuals and councils and Parliaments and kings became at last the deliberate and

final protests of the Church of the nation, and the still Romanized Church of England in doctrine rejected the incubus of the papal supremacy and became ecclesiastically free; and also how, in the wonderful providence of God the leaven was set to work and the forces were put in operation, by which those simple and Scriptural and apostolic truths, which at first were promulgated by Wycliffe and afterwards by Ridley and Latimer and Cranmer, were to become the authorised and formulated teaching of the emancipated national Church.

CHAPTER V.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH A ROMANIZED NATIONAL CHURCH.

Reasons why Rome's influence was so strong in the English Church—The Papal policy with regard to Christian countries—The Roman pallium conferred on English Church archbishops—The pallium was a sign of Roman allegiance—Peter's pence also—The Church of England doctrinally Romanized before the eleventh century—The Councils of Clovesho and Chelsea show this—The English Church monastic system as a Romanizing force—Odo and Dunstan—The Canons of Aelfric—The Romanizing influence of Edward the Confessor.

FROM the eighth century onwards the influence of Rome over the Church in England continued to be great.

XXI. *What reasons can be assigned for the singular growth of Rome's influence in England from this period?*

The causes are not far to seek.

The first and most natural was, as we have seen, the strong ultramontanism of Augustine, Wilfrid, and Theodore. Another was the conferring of the Roman pallium upon the Anglican primate, of which we shall have more to say presently. Although Augustine's mission had been a comparative failure, it had established a precedent which Rome was the last in the world to lose sight of. Not only was the appointment of Wilfrid and Theodore by the Pope of Rome another link in a chain already strong, but their episcopate from first to last was a steady establishment of Roman pre-eminence. The adoption of

Roman customs, the continual intercourse with Rome by pilgrimages (Green's "Conquest of England," page 17), the incessant arrivals of Rome-trained ecclesiastics, and Roman legates (Green's "Making of England," page 422), all combined to raise the prestige of the great centre of Western Christendom, and simplify the way for the assertion of her growing claims. In fact it may be asserted that few of the independent or national Churches of that age offered such submissive homage to the papacy as the Church of England. Nor was this inconsistent with her independence. For at that time the monstrous claim of Rome to a pseudo-divine pre-eminence over crowns, and thrones, and subjects, and souls, was as yet little more than a dream. Hildebrand was not for two centuries yet. The forged decretals not till about 845. Inflated as the pomp of Roman popes was—and it swelled terribly after the discovery of the so-called Donation of Constantine in 776—it had not yet reached the length of universal dictation. In fact it was the policy of the Roman popes to foster the idea of independence and nationality on the part of the countries in which Christianity was established. But it was to be national rather than ecclesiastical independence (Kurtz, p. 327). Spiritually, they were to be subject to the centre of Catholic unity, the spiritual head of Christendom, the Pope. Doctrinally, they were, of course, to be identical with Rome, divergence on this point as a matter of fact being considered heresy by the Church of England till almost the middle of the sixteenth century. But so far as national rights were concerned, the See of St. Peter desired every Christian country, like England, to preserve its political independence.

When we say then that the Church of England at this time was submissive to Rome, we speak only of that submission which a comparatively inferior body gives to a superior body with which it is spiritually in union. The Church of England was not abjectly subject in the Hildebrandine sense, nor was it guilty of the vassalage of the days of Henry III. Such subjection as that was impossible. That time had not yet come.

But it was in union with Rome spiritually. It was identical with Rome doctrinally. And it was beyond controversy in a way subject to Rome ecclesiastically.

XXII. *Is there anything that can be adduced as a really conclusive proof of this?*

There is. The conferring of the Roman pallium is a very strong evidence in point. It shows that the head of the Church of Rome was in such a manner related to the Church of England that his authorization was obtained for the appointment and institution of its archbishops, the Metropolitan heads of the Church of the realm.

When Egbert became Archbishop of York, in the year 734–735, he received the pallium, or embroidered white woollen collar which was the symbol of the Pope's authority, from Pope Gregory of Rome. When in the following year, Nothelm was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury he received the pallium also, as an acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Roman See.

When Pope Adrian despatched legates to England in the year 787 to set up a new archiepiscopate to please Offa, King of Mercia, Higbert, the new Metropolitan Archbishop of Lichfield, accepted the pall from the Pope of Rome, professing thereby his

allegiance. When Kenulf, the new King of Mercia, saw that the new archbishopric of Lichfield was overshadowing that of Canterbury, and desired to restore things to their former state, it is the most natural thing in the world for him to write to the Pope on the matter. To whom shall he go if not to the Bishop of Rome? And it is the most natural thing in the world for the Pope to reply with regard to the matter, as the spiritual head of the Church whose authority and jurisdiction were never for a moment in question.

When not long after, Ethelheard, the Archbishop of Canterbury, went to Rome to confer with the Pope, the letter that followed from Rome was just as significant. The Pope, in virtue of his spiritual claim, not only gave him, but gave all his successors, authority over all the Churches of the English, and writes to King Kenulf to that effect. And the English Council of Clovesho solemnly ratified, and carried out his determination.

When in the year 805 Archbishop Ethelheard died, the clergy in Synod addressed a letter of remonstrance to Pope Leo on the custom of English Metropolitans being obliged to go to Rome in person to get their palls from the Pope (Perry, i. 90). They urged the precedents of Paulinus and others to whom the palls had been sent. But there is not a word about rejecting the pall. The idea of repudiating the notion of subjection to Rome (for that is what the pall implied), never seems to have occurred to them. Nor did it to the Pope. Their request seemed a reasonable one, so instead of the new Archbishop of Canterbury coming to Rome for his pall, the Pope sent it on to him.

But even after this the custom of going to Rome

was not unknown. The successor of Archbishop Odo, Elfsy of Winchester, who had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury was on his way to obtain the pall from the Pope, when he died. When Siric, Archbishop of Canterbury, died in the year 995 and Aelfric was chosen his successor, and Aelfric desired to make some innovations in his See, the king, though he approved of the proposed alterations, thought that the Pope's sanction should be obtained before any changes were made, and the clerks who were going to suffer by the change sent two of their number to bribe the Pope into giving them the pall to bring to the English Archbishop. And then when the Archbishop elect came himself to Rome, the Pope invited him to celebrate mass at St. Peter's Altar, and the Pope himself put on him the pall (*ibid.*, 129, 130). His successor, Elphege, took the journey to Rome also for the pall in 1006.

And so on, and so on. Instance after instance could be quoted showing this acceptance of the pallium on the part of Archbishops of the Church of England from the Pope of the Church of Rome (Stubbs, iii. 297).

XXIII. *But did this conferring of the pallium by the Pope really mean the recognition of the Papal supremacy?*

Certainly it did.

How much submission it involved depends in great measure upon what is meant by the papal supremacy. The papal supremacy in the eighth century was one thing; in the eleventh century, another. The acceptance of the pallium at one time may simply have meant the recognition of the Pope as the honorary primate of the Churches of Western Christendom.

As early as the fifth century the Bishop of Rome claimed a kind of conventional authority over all the Metropolitans ; a claim that advanced during the pontificate of Gregory the Great, during whose time the bestowal of the pallium became very common. But in Gregory's day it was in many cases a merely voluntary recognition of the Pope's supremacy, though the Pope in conferring it may have had higher ideas.

After the seventh century, however, the acceptance of the pallium involved a profession of allegiance to the Pope of Rome (Smith's "Dict. Antiq.," ii. 1674). The claims and pretensions of the Papacy advanced about this time, and for some time afterwards with fatal rapidity, and as a standard authority on the subject says: "The pallium is now no longer an exceptional honour granted to this or that archbishop, but a badge, the acceptance of which implied the acknowledgment by the wearer of the supremacy of the Apostolic See" (*ibid.*, 1548). And in the year 866 Pope Nicholas I. ordered that no archbishop could be enthroned, or even consecrate the eucharist, till he had received the pallium from the Roman See.

Taking the two facts into conjunction ; the Pope's claims on the one hand that the pallium represented his spiritual supremacy, and the regular acceptance of the pallium on the part of the heads of the English from the Roman Pope ; there can be no doubt that from the eighth century onward the Church of England was in this respect, at least, submissive to the Papacy, and as far as the pallium represented the supremacy of the Pope, the Church of England recognised it.

The election of archbishops by the kings and the witan in no way militates against this argument.

The Church of England was a national Church. As a national Church it was politically independent. And as we have said before it was the policy of the Popes of Rome at this time to foster this national idea, as it was in perfect keeping with the recognition of their universal spiritual supremacy. The archbishops were selected by the king; that was a national matter. But they were instituted, so to speak, by the Pope; that was a spiritual matter. It was the recognition of the supremacy of the head of the Catholic Church, and the acknowledgment on their part as the representatives of the national Church of allegiance. It was to Rome that the missionaries of England looked, as the religious centre of Christendom. If they drew their temporal power from the Frankish sword, they sought spiritual authority from the hands of the Roman bishop (Green, "The Making of England," p. 416). Of course, as the centuries passed on, and the Papal supremacy involved more and more subjection on the part of the Churches that admitted it, the Church of England becomes more identified with the Papacy, and more absolutely subject to it.

The payment of Peter's Pence might also be mentioned here. This was at first a kind of national contribution for the support of the inn for English pilgrims at Rome, called the Schola Saxonica. Afterwards, it became a regular tribute paid by the English nation to the Papal See, and dates from the time of Offa, King of Mercia (*ibid.*, 423).

During the troublous days of the Danish incursions it naturally fell off, but King Cnut or Canute, restored it again. The council of Eynsham too, in 1007, had enacted its payment (Perry, i. 131). The compara-

tively rare instances of any opposition to this principle, are the strongest proofs of its universal admission. And the opposition really came only after the yoke of the Pope became so heavy ; a yoke that even the long-suffering Catholic churchmen of England were unable to bear. Of which we shall hear presently.

XXIV. *But this refers only to the ecclesiastical position of the Church of England. What grounds are there for asserting that she was identified with the Church of Rome in doctrine, or to speak of her as a Romanized national Church ?*

There are many things.

It is the custom of some Church writers to speak of the Church of England being Romanized only *after* the eleventh century, say after the time of Edward the Confessor. Professor Freeman may be taken as an instance, who speaks of the Romanizing influence of Herman, a German of Lotharingia, and others (" The Norman Conquest," vol. ii. p. 81). But what they mean is that at about that time the influence of Rome became so great, and intercourse with the Papal See so frequent (*ibid.*, 67), and the appointment of German and French and Italian ecclesiastics so common, that the English Church became accustomed to points of Roman ritual, and matters of Roman usage and canonical observance hitherto unintroduced into England. It merely referred to the trivial matter of ritual, of form, of canonical regulations.

When we say that the Church of England during these centuries was a Romanized Church, we mean that it was Romish in its teaching, holding in its entirety the body of Romish sacerdotal Christianity or Popery, as far as it was then developed. What

this was may be gathered from the fact that at the Council of Clovesho in the year 747, it was ordered among other matters:—

That the great festivals and holidays should be always celebrated on the same days on which the Roman Church celebrates them, and with the same hymns and psalms that the Roman Church uses in the office of baptism, and the celebration of the Mass.

That the seven canonical hours should be observed with such psalms and prayers as the Roman Church uses.

That the solemn litanies should be said by clergy and people at certain times, with fasting and the celebration of the Mass at the ninth hour, to implore pardon for the sins of the people.

That the natal day of Gregory, and the day of burial of St. Augustine, should be observed as holy days (Perry, i. 78; Martineau, pp. 218, 219).

Or the Council of Chelsea may be quoted.

This council was held in the year 787, and the canons or constitutions which were there adopted as the rules and views of the English Church were brought from Rome by the legates of the Pope of Rome, Pope Adrian, who were present in this council. At the dictation of the Pope of Rome, the Church of England, through its kings and bishops, and abbots and nobles, accepted as its own the canonical regulations of these Roman legates, in which it was ordered among other matters:—

That bishops, canons, and monks, use proper apparel as those of Rome and Italy. That is, the Roman garments and vestments.

That the privileges conferred by the Roman See in certain churches were to be observed.

That fasts were to be properly observed.

That proper bread was to be offered at the Eucharist.

Or the Council of Chelsea in 816 may be quoted, where among other things it was ordered:—

That the churches, when built, should be consecrated by the bishop with the sprinkling of holy water, and all ceremonies prescribed in the Book of Ministrations. (The Book of Ministrations, by the way, was Archbishop Egbert's pontifical, the Roman name for the book containing the offices of the Church, &c., and its contents show clearly the position of the Church in England then. The order of the Mass is found in it; the form of ordaining priests, deacons, and subdeacons, according to the manner of the Church of Rome: forms of masses at the dedication of fonts, churches, cemeteries, &c.; the Roman rites for Maundy Thursday; the blessing of the Paschal lamb, and of incense, and various other forms of blessing, and consecration of arms, and bread, and books, and wine; forms of prayer to be recited when the Holy Cross is adored, and palms are to be blessed, &c., &c.) (Smith's "Dict. Christ. Antiq.," ii. 1649).

That the Eucharist, with the relics, should be enclosed in a case, and preserved in the church.

That Scotch or Irish priests should not be allowed to minister, as their orders were uncertain.

That on the death of a bishop, thirty psalms should be sung for the soul of deceased, and that each abbot should cause 600 psalters and 120 masses to be said for his soul (Perry, p. 92).

Surely nothing could more convincingly illustrate the Romanization of the English Church than these things. The mass, the mass priest, prayers for the

dead, holy water and incense, Roman ritual (Martineau, p. 244), Roman orders, Roman ceremonials, what are all these things but the signs and symbols of the thing which we speak of, the Romish religion.

The monasticism of the English Church only intensified its Romishness. Under Archbishops Odo and Dunstan the monastic system gained vastly, and the monks were notoriously Romish. Some of the canons adopted in Dunstan's day may be quoted in proof:—

That mass is only to be celebrated in a church, except in cases of extreme sickness.

That there must always be a hallowed altar for mass, that the priest must always have a corporas or napkin, and wear all the fitting mass vestments.

That the Eucharist must be taken fasting.

That there must be holy water, salt, frankincense, and bread.

That oil is to be had in readiness for baptism, and anointing (Perry, p. 118).

Or the canons, or charge, of Aelfric (A.D. 994, or as some think, A.D. 957), which Canon Perry describes as the most distinctive and striking teaching that had appeared in the English Church since the days of Bede and Alcuin, may be referred to. According to it, it appears:—

That there were seven orders in the English Church as in the Church of Rome—viz., ostiary, lector, exorcist, acolyte, sub-deacon, deacon, priest, or presbyter.

That the seven canonical hours, with tide songs, were to be observed—viz., the uht song (matins), the prime-song, the undern song (tierce), the mid-day song, the noon-song (none), the even song, and the night-song, compline.

That the mass priest shall have his holy books.

That the mass priest shall have his mass vestment.

That the priests were to procure oil for baptism and for extreme unction.

That the holy cross, or crucifix (the rood), was to be adored and kissed on Good Friday.

That the holy sacrament is to be reserved for the sick.

That the mass contra paganos is to be sung every Wednesday (*ibid.*, 125–129).

The great Church Council at Eynsham, in 1007, shows a similar state of things ; and the Council at Habam, in 1014, which ordered a daily mass to be sung for the king, and convents to celebrate thirty masses for the king and people on account of the Danish troubles.

In short, he who runs may read. The religion of the Church of England was the Romish religion.

True. The doctrine of transubstantiation was as yet unformulated. The selling of indulgences only began at the end of the eleventh century. The worship of the Virgin Mary in the modern Roman way was scarcely known before the thirteenth. The dogmas of Papal Infallibility and the Immaculate Conception are not to be adopted for centuries. But as far as the substance and body of the Roman system of doctrine and worship was concerned, these facts undeniably prove that the Church of England professed it.

In some things the Church of England was unquestionably superior. It encouraged the use of the vernacular, and under certain of its primates and kings adopted a simple and Scriptural way. This was notably the case in the reign of King Alfred,

whose zeal for religion and education and the spread of God's Word was so great (Martineau, "Church Hist. of Eng.," pp. 211, 212). It was perhaps less formal in its ceremonial, and less pretentious in its pomp, poorer in its relics, and less idolatrous in devotion. But these were matters of detail; they concern the accidents, not the principles and the essentials of religion.

So far as principles were concerned, there was but one religion in the West, in England, Germany, and Rome, and that was the religion of the Roman See.

During the reign of Edward the Confessor, 1042–1066, the ascendency of the Roman See became more marked. Foreign prelates swarmed in, and intercourse with Rome was constant. Not only archbishops, but bishops also adopted the practice of going to Rome either for actual consecration or for confirmation of their consecration at the hands of the Pope. The Pope's interfering power, too, is exercised in a way never attempted before. He not only bestows the pall on the English archbishops, but exercises so powerful an influence as to deny the consecration of an English bishop, Spearhafoc, the Bishop Designate of London. The fact is the papal supremacy is growing (Green, "The Conquest of England," 507), and England is to know its development by sad experience.

Appeals to Rome become more common. Papal legates appear more frequently. Peter's pence, the Rome fee, is to be paid regularly. Ecclesiastics are to have certain immunities; ecclesiastical affairs a certain precedence. The cultus of St. Peter is to be more worthily observed. "The special object of Edward's reverence was the Apostle Peter, and his

reverence for that saint did no good to the kingdom of England. His devotion to the apostle led to a devotion to his supposed successor, and to that frequency of intercourse with the Roman See" (Freeman, "The Norman Conquest," ii. 498).

The Church is becoming more and more involved in complete subjection to the Church of Rome (Perry, 154).

In fact, the history of the next two centuries is a history of the increasing vassalage of the English Church to the Roman See.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH AFTER THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

The Norman Conquest an important epoch in English Church history—William the Norman a masterful man—The effect of his conquest two-fold—Political independence of Rome, doctrinal identification with Rome—William's policy of introducing foreign prelates—The Roman influence of Lanfranc—The enforcement of clerical celibacy — The dogma of transubstantiation — The pontificate of Hildebrand—Its effects upon the Conqueror and England—Archbishop Anselm, a noble man, but strongly Papal—The system of appeals to Rome—Introduction of practice of sending a Papal legate to England—The Pope's control of the English Church.

THE year 1066, the year of the Norman Conquest, marks an era of no small importance in the history of the English Church.

With the historical features of the Conquest itself we are not here concerned. It was the daring act of a bold, strong man, and as Freeman terms it, the turning point of all English history. Displaying as ardent a desire to identify himself with England as Canute himself, the Conqueror accepted as the offer of the people the crown which he had won by the sword; and as if the very touch of British soil had awakened in him the genius of liberty, he not only ruled the land with a kind of rude justice, but in the spirit of true English independence defied even the Pope, to whose support in great measure he owed the conquest.

William was nothing if not masterful. He was Cæsar in his own kingdom, and the people soon found he would yield to neither Saxon, nor Dane, nor Scot, nor Italian.

XXV. *What then was the effect of William the Norman's reign upon the Church of England? Was it to render it more subject to the Papacy, or the reverse? Did it impair its essentially national character, or did it emphasise its autonomy and distinctiveness?*

It may seem almost paradoxical to say it, but the truth is, the effect of the Norman's sway over England was two-fold. In one way it more completely Romanized the Church of England, and brought it under the yoke of the Pope of Rome. In another way it operated in the very opposite direction. It awakened the spirit of opposition to the Papal claims, and gave to England the spirit of national Protestantism. The explanation of this apparent paradox is simple.

The identification of the English Church with Rome was a doctrinal, ecclesiastical, ceremonial matter; the Protestantism of William was political, personal.

The Protestantism had nothing to do with doctrine. The Romanization was not inconsistent with national ecclesiastical independence. There is, in fact, a strong likeness in many ways between William the Norman and Henry VIII. Both were strong-willed, and defiantly English. Both were intolerant of Papal impertinence, and firm in their assertion of national rights. And yet in matters doctrinal and spiritual both were vigorous Romanists, and firm advocates of the Romish system of worship. Of both it may be said, in matters religious they were Romanists; in

matters political, that is ecclesiastico-national, they were Protestants.

XXVI. *We have said that one of the first effects of the Conquest was the more complete Romanization of the Church. In what way and by what means was this brought about?*

In this way.

Before he attempted the conquest of England, William assumed the rôle of an obedient son of the Church, and appealed to the Pope for his aid in the matter of the vacant crown of England.

Thus far he acknowledged the jurisdiction of the Roman See, and in return the Pope authorised William to take possession of the realm of England, and blessed for him a cross-embroidered banner. It was as a Pope's man, and with the Pope's benediction, that he gained the English crown. Indeed, one Papal writer (Bernold, quoted by Freeman, ii. 166) describes William as the king who brought the whole of the realm of England into subjection to the Roman pontiff. "Qui totam Anglorum terram Romano pontifici tributariam fecit."

Installed in the kingdom, the Conqueror proceeded to throw the Church of England more directly into the arms of the Pope (Perry, i. 157), almost completely effacing any English distinctiveness, and sweeping it into the great submerging tide of Roman Christianity. Its national features were gradually obliterated. Doctrinal distinction there was none to speak of, even before. But, barring the reception of the pall and the payment of Peter's pence, there was a tolerably strong sentiment of Anglican independence. Now this disappears in great measure through the subtle policy of the Conqueror. His idea was a sub-

missive episcopate, as well as a submissive nobility. He speedily determined to send all the native bishops about their business. A tentative measure was adopted first, to soften the heavier blow to follow. All English abbots and bishops were excluded from preferment, and for some time "the appointment of an Englishman to a bishopric is unknown."

In 1070 the real work began.

After being crowned by two legates, sent from Rome for the purpose of securing England for the Papacy, William proceeded to humiliate the Church by deposing the national bishops, and substituting foreigners, Normans and Italians.

Stigand, the primate, was the first to be removed, and Lanfranc, of Pavia and Bec, was put in his place, and in due time went to the Pope to receive the pallium. Others soon had to follow. In the year 1070, the Pope's legate, with characteristic effrontery, undertook the business himself in a synod of his own, at which he deposed and appointed in the most despotic style. As the legate of the Pope, he also consecrated one of his newly appointed bishops, Walkelin, bishop of Winchester, a former chaplain of the king (Freeman, iv. 344). In short, William's motto seems to have been: No Englishman need apply. What with depositions, and deprivations, and retirements, in less than five years from the Conquest, only one Anglo-Saxon bishop was to be found in England.

One result only could follow from this.

The Church of England became one with the Church of the Continent. And the Church of the Continent was, of course, one with the Church of Rome. The most recent developments of Roman

usages, Roman ritual, Roman orders, prevail throughout the Church of England.

It will be necessary here to specify more particularly the way in which this happened.

It was during this era, and directly owing to this policy of William, that the Church of England was brought within the range of two of the most deadly features of Romish Christianity, the doctrine of transubstantiation in the mass, and the doctrine of celibacy in the priesthood. Both of these are signs of the advancing corruption of the faith, and are of the essence of Romish sacerdotalism. It was chiefly owing to Lanfranc, the Romish Archbishop of Canterbury, that they were introduced into England. We say the Romish archbishop, because Lanfranc was by every instinct a Papist, and in every doctrinal conviction a Roman.

Lanfranc was one of the ablest men of his day. The equal, if not the superior, of Pope Gregory himself, he grasped the sceptre of ecclesiastical power with a hand as strong as that of the Conqueror. He was a scholar of continental reputation. As an abbot he had learned to rule. As a theologian he was skilled in the controversies of the day. Resolute, vigorous, imperious, the impress of his administration in matters doctrinal and ecclesiastical in England, was profound. He was called the Pope of England. And it was well said; for so he was (Freeman's "Norman Conquest," iv. 347–349).

When, therefore, the Papacy was reaching its climax in the claims of the Roman Pontiff to universal supremacy, and the doctrine of Rome was gradually being stereotyped in that corrupt and unscriptural form towards which it had been progressing for cen-

turies, Lanfranc, the Hildebrand of the British Isles, and the champion of Popery, was the arbiter of the destinies of the Church in England.

The first serious element of Papal ecclesiasticism that tended to bind the Church of England in the unity of Rome was the matter of the celibacy of the priesthood. Hildebrand enforced this in 1074 in Rome. It was simply a necessity of the Papal system. It enormously augmented the power of the priest. It enormously augmented the power of the Pope. It had to be done, and it was done. From the Papal standpoint, it was the strongest move ever made by a Pope.

But to enforce it in England was no easy matter.

The clergy for centuries had been permitted to marry, though the practice of celibacy had been on the increase since the days of Odo and Dunstan, and great resistance might be expected. Already there had been resistance in Germany and France (*see* Robertson, "Hist. Christ. Ch.," iv. 302).

Lanfranc, however, was equal to the occasion. If Rome had spoken, England must obey; and if he could not get all that he wanted, he would get what he could.

At the Council of Winchester, in 1076, he took the first steps in the matter. He was shrewd enough to see that the summary prohibition of the clergy to marry, would simply mean contempt of the law, and defeat the very object he had in view. So he adopted a compromise that would bring in the principle, and yet not defeat its operation.

A canon was introduced, which drew a distinction between the ordinary clergy and such Church dignitaries as canons and others. It absolutely and unconditionally forbade the latter to marry.

This was the first stern decree: Let no canon have a wife (Freeman, "The Norman Conquest," iv. 424). And it peremptorily compelled those who had them to leave them, and live henceforth as single men. With regard to the ordinary married priests, policy induced for the moment a milder decree. They were to be allowed to retain their wives. "Sacerdotes habentes uxores non cogantur ut dimittant."

But this was a mere bagatelle. It really amounted to nothing, as far as the principle was concerned, for in the future the clergy themselves were not to marry, and bishops were to take care not to ordain any unless they first solemnly promised to abstain from matrimony.

The passing of this decree was one thing; the enforcement of it another. For a long time the clergy kicked against it, and for a while successfully. Even under Anselm, who was perhaps even stronger in the matter than Lanfranc, there was a good deal of evasion, and even for generations afterwards, but finally all resistance died away, and the victory of Hildebrand was complete.

Again the triumph of Rome has involved the forfeiture of English independence. The doctrine of a celibate priesthood is of the very essence of Romanism. Its only object is the consolidation of the clergy in devotion to the Pope. It detaches them from every earthly allegiance; it binds them absolutely to a master whose laws are above all laws.

In accepting this doctrine, therefore, the Church of England not only proclaimed its further departure from the faith of Christ and His apostles (1 Tim. iv. 1–3), but yielded itself with easy submissiveness into complete allegiance to the Papacy.

The other element of Romanism which was imperilling the doctrinal soundness of the Church at that time was the dogma of transubstantiation.

This idolatrous and anti-Christian doctrine, as some great Church writers call it, was unknown in the primitive era of the faith, and canonically unformulated as a dogma till the Lateran Council in 1215. From the middle of the ninth century the opinions of Paschasius Radbert, who is generally known as the first advocate of the doctrine, gradually gained ground; and, after the end of the tenth century, the trend of Church thought and teaching was strongly in the direction of the extreme view of the sacrament. The growth and spread of scholasticism helped also.

About the year 1050, a French churchman, called Berengarius, brought matters to a head by boldly teaching that the change in the elements of the sacrament at consecration was not one of substance; and that the presence of Christ was not one of essence, but of power, and needed faith in the partaker. The state of Church teaching at the time is shown by the way these views were received. They created a perfect storm. A synod was held in Rome, in 1050, and Berengar was condemned without even a hearing. At another synod, in 1059, he was compelled to burn his own treatise, and subscribe with his own hand the grossest statement of the dogma of transubstantiation. And when he seemed to weaken a little on the matter, and in rather ambiguous formula to assert the real presence, he was once more compelled to state clearly and unequivocally his belief that at the time of consecration the

substance of the elements was really transformed (Kurtz, 429).

Now the chief opponent of Berengarius was our English archbishop, Lanfranc; and there seems to be a general agreement that Lanfranc was the man who first brought this Popish dogma into the Church of England. He laid the foundation, and built the building too. And from this time on until the middle of the sixteenth century, the dogma of the Church of Rome, that the bread and wine upon the altar, after consecration, are really transubstantiated into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, was held in the Church in England, and taught as fervently by English as by Italian churchmen.

When it is stated then that the immediate effect of the Norman Conquest upon the Church of England was its almost complete identification with the great tide of the Romish ecclesiastical system, the meaning of course is, that William brought over to England a great body of Continental ecclesiastics, and that these men in turn brought into England the great body of Continental ecclesiastical dogmas, and permeated the Church of England with the Romish system. The whole primacy of Lanfranc, as Freeman says, tended to bring the English Church into closer dependence on the See of Rome.

XXVII. *But it was stated above, that the effect of William's reign was at the same time to awake in England the spirit of Protestant independence, and to revive in no small degree that anti-Papal defiance which so distinguished the primitive British Church. How was this?*

The answer is very simple.

The opposition of William and Lanfranc was not to Romanism, but to Rome ; and any independence and resistance to the Pope on the part of either Lanfranc or William was touching the authority, not the doctrine, of the Papacy. For it must be clearly understood that at this time two great currents from Rome were running in side by side. The one was the great current of Roman sacerdotalism. The other was the great current of Papal dictatorship. The one concerned matters of faith, and doctrine, and worship. The other matters of secular rule, and human authority, and national rights.

The first current ran in unwithstood. Not only so, but with every aid of conviction and influence Lanfranc and William facilitated its influx. Never had it risen so high before. And never before had it such free course in England. The British Channel no longer served as a middle wall of partition, nor the prelates of England as the champions of a primitive Christianity.

Lanfranc and Anselm changed all that.

But with the second current it was different. It, too, was beginning to run to a higher height, and with more overwhelming force than ever was known before.

For a long time the spiritual supremacy of the occupant of the Roman See had been universally acknowledged in Western Christendom ; but it was reserved to a Gregory the VII., or Hildebrand, to unfold in its naked fulness the unprecedented doctrine of the supremacy of the Pope, and the universal theocracy of the Papal See ; its immunity from all interference on the part of civil powers ; its Divine authority over kings and kingdoms ; its power to

depose emperors from their thrones, and absolve subjects from their allegiance; and the Divine right of the Roman Pontiff to judge all men, while he himself is to be judged of none (Robertson's "Hist. Christ. Ch.," iv. 293; Butler's "Eccles. Hist.," ii. 26; Mosheim's "Eccles. Hist.," ii. 161). It can certainly not be said that there was anything indefinite about the views of Hildebrand. He knew what he wanted, and he stated what he meant.

The theory of the Pope's headship to him was not a mere sentiment. It was a fact. And a fact he determined to make it. Bishops and princes, priests and kings, alike must bow the knee. From no vulgar love of power, or base craving for despotic force, but from a profound conviction of the great place of the Church, and the Divinely intended authority of the vicar of Christ on earth, did Gregory strive and scheme with all his might for the universal recognition of the Pope as the supreme arbiter and disposer of all kings and kingdoms, princes and peoples.

It was a grand idea. And if it had been inaugurated in the spirit of Christ, and exercised by Christlike men in a spiritual manner, it would not only have mellowed the despotisms of the age, and rescued the masses from the arbitrary exactions of their rulers, but would have accomplished to all human appearance, by spiritual unity, the salvation of the world. Unfortunately, however, this magnificent ideal was debased by many earthly admixtures, and the doctrine of Hildebrand was speedily found to mean the practical enslavement of every king in Western Europe.

But when Gregory tried to put this doctrine into practice in England he found he could not do it. The imperious spirit of the Norman rose in defiance, and

in the struggle William once more was conqueror. No more obedient and faithful son of the Church was found in his age than William the Conqueror; but when it came to interference with his rights and liberties, as the sovereign of the English realm, he took his stand. Servant he was, but slave he would not be.

It came about in this way.

A legate came from Gregory with a double demand on William. First he was to send in the arrears of the Peter's Pence which, for some reason or other, had not been paid for some years. Second, he was to profess submission to the Pope of Rome.

The Conqueror's reply was short, but clear.

He allowed the one claim; the other he did not. He would pay up the arrears of money, and see to its more regular payment in the future. But the claim of fealty was another thing altogether. He had not done it before, and he was not prepared to do it now. He had not promised it himself, and as far as he could ascertain neither had his predecessors to any former Popes.

Freeman strikes the right note when he says, in his comment on this matter, that the calm daring with which he braved the imperious Hildebrand proved that with the crown of the Island Empire William had, in the face of foreign powers, assumed the spirit which became one who wore it (Freeman, "The Norman Conquest," iv. 433).

Another thing. William was determined to be the supreme ruler in his own kingdom. The Papal supremacy was all very well for Italy, and, if the Emperor was complacent enough, for Germany; but in England there could be one head, and one head

only. Nay, more. He actually carried the doctrine of the royal supremacy to such a length that he made it known that it was his will that no Pope should be acknowledged as Pope throughout his dominions except by his order, and that no letters (or bulls) from Rome were to be received in England until they had first been shown to him (Freeman, iv. 438). William, like Henry VIII., loved power intensely. He loved it so much that the love of it in others awakened his despotic temper to the utmost, and exasperated him ; for, as a rule, our besetting sin is the one we feel most indignant about in other people. However that may be, the kingly supremacy established by William became, in the good providence of God, one of the means in after years of emancipating our Church from the thraldom of the Pope. There was nothing evangelical, or even spiritual, in William's Protestantism. It had nothing whatever to do with Popery, or with the religion of Rome. It was altogether a national ecclesiastical matter. Or rather, like the Protestantism of that devoted Romanist Henry VIII., it was a personal matter. He opposed the Pope, not because he did not believe in the doctrine of Peter's chair, but because in his own kingdom he preferred to be Pope himself. That was all.

XXVIII. *After the death of William the Conqueror what progress did the Papacy make in England?*

Much.

We are now entering upon the period of the complete and acknowledged triumph, not only of Popery, but of the Papacy in the Church and realm of England. It is a period that is to witness the release of the Church from the imperious dictatorship of the king ; but also to witness its transfer to the still more

imperious dictatorship of the Pope. It is to witness a reaction from that tyranny of unscrupulous kings which was the cause of its submission to another master, whose yoke was, if possible, still harder to bear. It is to witness the once independent Church of England bowing under the name of freedom in absolute vassalage to the Church of Rome.

William the Conqueror is succeeded by William Rufus, and Lanfranc is succeeded by Anselm; a conscientious ecclesiastic, and an unprincipled king. The mantle of the Conqueror had fallen on Rufus, and the mantle of Lanfranc had fallen on Anselm. Before long the inevitable struggle began. It was the old question which was to be master, the king or the Pope. And the struggle was a great one.

As far as the merits of the men went, there was only one choice. Rufus was an utterly bad man, irreligious, lawless. Anselm, on the other hand, was pious, conscientious, earnest, and firm as a rock in his convictions.

A skilled dialectician, and a very master of scholastic lore, he never seems for a moment to have wavered in his devotion to what he conceived to be the right. A Roman of Romans, he endeavoured through the whole of his Anglican primacy to have acted for what he considered the highest spiritual interests of the English Church. But the merits of a question must never be decided merely by the character of the men who uphold either the one side or the other, and we must not allow our admiration for either the piety or consistency of Archbishop Anselm to blind our minds to the fact that what this truly excellent man was working for throughout the whole of his illustrious career

was the establishment of the Papal supremacy in England.

From the very start Anselm was on the Pope's side. His noble and exalted character only intensified his convictions, and made the attainment of his dazzling object more feasible ; the right of the Pope to control the appointment of bishops and archbishops, and to rule from Rome the universal Church. The abuse of kingly power on the part of the Conqueror's successor greatly forwarded this end. It fact it was the excess of the Royal Supremacy in the person of William Rufus that enabled Anselm in a reactionary period to introduce the Papal Supremacy. The story is too long to tell here. Suffice it to say that after a long struggle between Anselm the Archbishop, and William the King, the monarch on his part, like his father before him, claiming the right to the homage of his own appointed archbishop, and to refuse any English ecclesiastic acknowledging a Pope whom the king did not recognise, the primate on his part holding that his fealty to the Pope was before all things, and that his authority, as symbolised by the pall, came from the Pope, the vicar of St. Peter, a compromise was effected, in which, as was natural, the papal party had the best of it. The king gave way when he found that the Pope's legate would not sanction his proposal to depose Anselm, and failing to expel him, he was reconciled to him without even conditions.

It was but a patched up peace at best, however, and within a year Anselm resolved to take himself to Rome, thus helping forward that fatal principle of appeals to Rome which worked in after days so disastrously to the Church.

When William died in 1100, and his brother Henry I. came to the throne, the same old fight was fought again. Was the king or the Pope to give the ring and the crozier to the bishop? Was the king or the Pope to rule in the Church? Anselm was firm, and so was the king. A long and dreary interval elapsed, and at last the crown once more gave way. The right of lay investiture was denied to the king, and the Church was freed henceforth from the tyranny of a Rufus or a Henry I. But the victory of the Church meant another victory of the Pope. The Church in England was snatched from the clutch of the king only to be clutched more firmly by the Pope. It was the old fable of the camel once more, and the camel had got his body pretty fairly in by this time.

Noble and spiritually minded as Anselm was—and what English Churchman can fail to feel proud of the author of "Cur Deus Homo"—there can be only one opinion with regard to the effect of his primacy on the Church of England. From first to last it was one steady process, not of Romanizing the Church, for in doctrine it was thoroughly Romanized already, but of binding the Church faster in the fetters of the papacy. Anselm was the second English Hildebrand, and the sweetness of his character and the devotion of his noble soul only gave him the greater power in the accomplishment of his great ecclesiastical policy, the subjection of the Church of England to Rome. (A very fine sketch of Anselm will be found in Milner's "Church History," pp. 489–496.)

It was during Henry the First's reign, and a few years after the death of Anselm, that a practice was reintroduced which pretty fairly shows to thinking minds that the English Church was even at this

period in integral union with the Church of Rome. This was the dispatching of a legate from Rome to represent in person the authority of the Papal See. The thing was not altogether new, for over 300 years before Pope's men had tried to lord it over the Council of Chelsea; but a papal legate in the year 1125 meant a good deal more than it did in the year 787. In 787 it meant little more than an overture of peace on the part of the Pope, and a respectful recognition of the spiritual supremacy of the Roman See on the part of England's King. But in 1125 it was different.

It meant the acceptance of the Hildebrandine conception of the papal supremacy on the part of the Church of England. It meant that the Church of England was to be henceforth governed from Rome. This is really what it meant. It meant that the boasted independence of the English Church was gone like a dream; that the Archbishop of Canterbury, the primate of the national Church, was now to be but a creature of the Italian usurper; that the Church was to be ruled by a nod of the Pope; or, what was even worse, by the nod of a man who was to rule simply because he was a creature of the Pope; that the Church of England, in one word, was to be part and parcel of that vast ecclesiastical system in vassalage to the chair of Peter the papacy.

The first legate was a Roman cardinal, John of Crema, who presided as the Pope's representative in a Council of the Church of England held at Westminster in 1125. He was succeeded in this position by William of Corboyle or Corbeil, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was appointed by the Pope Honorius II. as his *legatus natus*, it being natural and fitting that the primate should occupy the position as his

regular or ordinary representative. This Archbishop of Canterbury summoned his next council at Westminster in 1127, by virtue of the power of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and his own, but the papal name came first; and the primate presided, not in his capacity as Archbishop of Canterbury, but as Legate of the Apostolic See (Perry, i. 209–213).

The papal legate, sometimes the primate, sometimes another English bishop, sometimes a foreigner, but always the visible symbol of the Roman supremacy, presided in the English Councils. When there was a dispute about an episcopal election, the Pope summoned all the parties to Rome, and of course they were bound to come. When he is pleased to do so, he orders all the English bishops to come to one of his councils, though the English bishops did not always obey his orders (*ibid.*, i. 273). When things displease him from the Royal quarter, nothing is easier than to pronounce an interdict, and deprive the nation of Church services and sacraments.

When an English monastery thinks fit to kick against the bishop, the Pope is only too pleased to grant exemption from episcopal control. When an English abbot becomes too proud to be considered the inferior of a diocesan bishop, the Pope despatches a bull to the effect that the whole establishment shall be altogether free from the subjection to bishops, and only be subject to the Roman Pontiff (*ibid.*, i. 259).

The Pope appoints fast days for the English Church as if he were a local bishop; dictates what vestments are to be worn by a Church of England ecclesiastic; multiplies and encourages appeals of all sorts to Rome; confirms the election of archbishops and bishops, and consecrates, as the primate of

primates, the Archbishop of Canterbury; orders a half-erected church at Lambeth to be demolished, and the order to be carried out in spite of the opposition of the great King Richard himself; declares that if obedience is not given the suffragan bishops are to withdraw their allegiance from the Archbishop of Canterbury; takes upon himself the right to appoint a dean to the cathedral of York by his own plenary authority; suspends one Archbishop of Canterbury, and appoints a man to superintend the diocese during his suspension; and, to crown all, decrees through his legate ecclesiastical regulations of the Church of the land concerning the celebration of the mass, the duties of deacons, the method of tonsure, the proceedings of monks and nuns, the marriage of priests, and the morals of the clergy!

And yet some churchmen have an idea that the Church of England during this period was an independent Church!

The fact is, as Canon Perry states in his description of the growth of the papacy during the twelfth century, that the Church of England had been brought into a position relative to the Pope, altogether different from that which it occupied under the Conqueror. Then papal decrees and papal interference could only come through the chief of the State, and with his permission. Now, though the State struggled against it, the Pope governed the Church of England immediately, and almost irrespective of the State power. It only needed a Pope of commanding power and high character to perfect the work, and to make the national Church of England, which in old times had been independent of rule, a simple tributary dependency of the foreign Church of Rome (*ibid.*, 287).

CHAPTER VII.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

Was the English Church then the Church of Rome in England?—The parallel of the Canadian Church and the Church of England to-day—King John and the reaction against Rome—Magna Charta was not aimed at the Papacy—It was to secure the Church not from the Pope but from the King—The outrageous exactions of the Papacy—The legate and the friar, the twin pests of England's Church—The career of Robert Grosseteste the anti-papal champion—Grosseteste, a precursor of the Reformation, and an embryo evangelical reformer—The age after Grosseteste—Simon de Montfort—The opposition of the English clergy to the Pope's bulls—There is hardly a proof of their being nationalists.

AS we are now approaching the period when the first beginnings of the spirit of reform are traceable in England, it is necessary for us to examine more closely the relation of the English Church to the papacy. We propose in this chapter to open out this question, and to show how the early movings of the Reformation lay deep in the principles of national independence and English ecclesiastical patriotism. At the same time, we will show that many of the early resistances of papal encroachments on the part of the clergy can scarcely be regarded as proof of either the nationalistic spirit of the clergy, or the Protestantism of the English Church as a Church.

XXIX. *What was then the exact position of the Church of England at the beginning of the thirteenth century? If the Pope practically governed the Church,*

and the Church of England was a simple dependency of the Church of Rome, was it not simply the Church of Rome in England?

Nominally the English Church was the Church of England, but practically, to all intents and purposes, in ritual, doctrine, and ecclesiastical unity, the Church of England was nothing more or less than the Church of Rome in England.

It occupied doctrinally and ecclesiastically a position similar, in most respects, to that which the Church of England now occupies in the Dominion of Canada.

The Church of England in Canada is an independent Church; that is, it is not under the jurisdiction of the leading Primate of the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury. It has its own archbishops, bishops, synods, and diocesan regulations. It has distinct and special canons. It has its own peculiar methods of Church administration and government, nor is it in any way in connection with the State. But with these exceptions, it is really one with the mother Church. It has the same service, the same prayers, the same articles; the same doctrine, the same order, the same truth; in short, with a few trifling differences, it is the same ecclesiastical body. English clergy are constantly appointed to its churches, and it frequently happens that bishops are sent over by the mother Church to preside over its dioceses. In one word it is the Church of England in Canada.

Now, it was exactly this way with the Church of England at the period we are speaking of, and, in fact, up to the time of the Reformation, It was a national Church. It was the Church of England,

just as the Canadian Church to-day is, territorially and technically speaking, distinct from the mother Church, and is by many churchmen called the Church of Canada. But it was in service, ritual, doctrine, orders, to all intents and purposes, a mere section of that ecclesiastical body known as the Church of Rome. *In name*, it was not the Church of Rome. It was the Church of England. But in deed, and in truth, in fact, if not in name, it was, to use Canon Perry's phrase, "a portion of the Church of Rome located in England." The English clergy, in 1246, in their message to the Pope stated it most clearly: "The English Church has ever been remarkable for its glories, and has always been *a special member* (membrum speciale) *of the Holy Church of Rome*" (Perry, i. 340).

But then the simile we have employed fails in one very important point, for there is no political connection between the various branches of the Church of England, nor does the Primate of the English Church assume, in the remotest degree, the position of a Gregory the Eleventh, or an Innocent the Third. Now the Church of Rome, besides claiming to be the only Church of that age, the undivided Holy Catholic Church, with the Pope, the tenant of the chair of Peter, as the visible head of the Church of God on earth, the centre of Catholic unity, was also something else than a mere Church, or spiritual ecclesiastical body. It was a political power, and its head was the greatest potentate in Europe. He was, in no mere rhetorical sense, a very king of kings and lord of lords by claim and conquest.

> "He did bestride the narrow world
> Like a Colossus."

He was a rich and tyrannous monarch. He was greedy of gold, and lustful of power. And the very Church with which as a spiritual body the English Church was in integral unity, with the Pope as the visible head of Catholicity, was the Church which in its political capacity, with the Pope as an imperial usurper, the English Church from time to time, with more or less success, most earnestly resisted. Not because the Church of England was not Roman ; but because the Church of England was a national or State Church, and the protests were politico-ecclesiastical, not spiritual or doctrinal.

XXX. *Then the spirit of resistance to the papal intrusions, that began in real earnest in the twelfth century, can hardly be called Protestant, or taken as evidences of the Protestant independence of the Church?*

Certainly not.

In the accurate sense of the word it was not Protestant at all.

The foul death of Thomas Becket in 1170 had greatly enhanced the supremacy of the papacy in England, and the reign of John witnessed the crowning act of its imperial rule. The Kingdom of England by an order of the Pope having been laid under an interdict, and John excommunicated, the humbled king with due solemnity formally surrendered his crown and kingdom to the Roman See. Not only did he promise the payment of an annual tribute in addition to Peter's Pence, but also all due fidelity to "St. Peter, the Church of Rome, and to my lord the Pope" ("Vestræ jurisdictionis est regnum Angliæ," Stubbs, iii. 292).

The indignation and the excitement aroused in England was extraordinary. Even the ultramon-

tanists, the clergy, began to show a spirit of resistance, and the barons were furious.

It is from this deep degradation of the humiliated Church and nation that we may date the rise of that spirit of national and ecclesiastical freedom which was destined in after days so radically to affect the character and position of the Church of England.

The reaction against Rome had begun.

But the resistance, let it not be forgotten, was altogether politico-ecclesiastical. At bottom it was probably personal detestation of one of the vilest of kings; and throughout it was national and constitutional, a question of appointments and investiture, and ecclesiastical prerogatives. If the clergy as well as the barons, and even the Roman Cardinal Archbishop Langton himself was against the king, and for the time being in a way against even the Pope, it must not be imagined for a moment there was any Protestant significance in it, or that Cardinal Langton was the forerunner of a Grosseteste to say nothing of a Wycliffe. The question was this. Shall a man devoid of every instinct of honour have the right to expel his clergy from the kingdom, persecute ecclesiastics, seize bishoprics and canonries, defy the courts of justice, murder his subjects, and treat the Church and the nation generally as a royal Bluebeard, even though it may please the Pope to favour his cause? And shall a creature of the Pope called a legate, ride rough shod over the Churches, and appoint in them whomsoever he will, in spite of the rights of bishops and patrons, and encourage a lawless monarch to seize their goods and pillage their property? The people to a man answered: No! And the action of Langton and the barons

must be interpreted in its true light, merely as an act of constitutional resistance to monarchical tyranny as regards the king; and, in so far as the Pope was concerned, only as an act of resistance to a piece of Roman interference that touched very seriously their property, and preferments, and privileges.

XXXI. *But did not Magna Charta assert the liberty of the Church, and were not some of its clauses especially inserted as a protest against the growing power of the Papacy?*

Magna Charta has been rightly considered as the foundation and basis of English liberties.

It is one of the corner stones of the British polity, and the mainstay of our national constitution. At Runnymede was blown the first blast from the trumpet of British liberty, which has since sounded with no uncertain sound.

But it is a great mistake to suppose that Magna Charta was primarily aimed at the Papacy, or that Cardinal Langton was posing as a Protestant champion against the rapacities of the Pope.

It is true that its first clause ran thus: That the English Church shall be free, and have her rights inviolate and her liberties unimpaired.* But the

* The first clause of John's charter in the original Latin is as follows:—"In primis concessisse Deo et hac praesenti carta nostra confirmasse, pro nobis et haeredibus nostris in perpetuum, quod Anglicana ecclesia libera sit, et habeat jura sua integra, et libertates suas illaesas; (et ita volumus observari; quod apparet ex eo quod libertatem electionum, quae maxima et magis necessaria reputatur ecclesiae Anglicanae, mera et spontanea voluntate, ante discordiam inter nos et barones nostros motam concessimus et carta nostra confirmavimus, et eam optinuimus a domino papa Innocentio tertio confirmari; quam et nos observabimus et ab haeredibus nostris in perpetuum bona fide volumus observari).—Taswell-Langmead, "Eng. Con. Hist.," p. 110.

question is after all the meaning of the words "the English Church shall be free," and that can only be solved by finding out from whom, and from what, the Church was to be free.

Did it mean that the Church of England was to be free from the Pope? Did it imply that the Church was to be free from the Papacy, or free from the grasp of a usurping Italian? No. That is not the meaning of the words at all.

It meant a very different thing. It meant that the Church was to be free from the *king!* It was to be free from the *royal grasp!* The Church of England was to be free, not from the interference of *the Pope*, but from the rapacity and greed of the *king!*

At first this may seem a little startling, as it is so contrary to the generally received opinion upon the subject. But that it is the real meaning is clear from the fact that Magna Charta in certain of its clauses and specifications was merely a repetition in substance of the charter of Henry I., the first clause of whose charter of liberties given over a hundred years before was: "I will make the holy Church of God *free*" (Green's "History of English People," i. 244; Stubbs' "Constitutional History," i. 532). The point then is, What did Henry I. mean?

Now what Henry I. meant was this: that henceforth the Church was to be freed from royal tyranny. There was to be no repetition of the disgraceful plundering of bishoprics and abbeys and ecclesiastical livings after the manner of William Rufus and Ralph Flambard. It did not mean that it was to be free from the Papacy, much less from Popery. There can be no mistake about this, for he clearly states it in his own explanatory words: "I will make

the holy Church of God free. I will neither sell, nor put to farm (its property). I will not take anything from the domain of the Church."

Thirty-six years or so after Henry I., his successor, Stephen, issued a charter, and exactly the same language occurs again: "I agree that holy Church shall be free, and I steadfastly promise it due respect." That is, he would not plunder abbeys of their treasures, and give their rich estates to the hangers-on of the court. He would not capture bishoprics to swell his own fortunes, or grant Church lands to his impecunious friends. It was the commonest thing for kings to do, and on the whole they found it rather an easy way of raising money. But this Stephen declares he will not do. There can be no doubt that this was what he meant by making the Church free, for he goes on to explain as follows:—

"I undertake to do nothing, or permit nothing to be done, in the Church, or in Church matters, *simoniacally*. I declare and confirm justice and power over ecclesiastical persons and their goods to belong to the bishops. I decree and allow that the dignities of churches, confirmed by their privileges, and their customs held according to ancient tenure, shall remain inviolate. I confirm whatever grants have been made, either by the liberality of kings, or the gifts of chief men. I promise that I will act according to peace and justice in all things, and to my power to preserve them" (Perry, i. 187–219).

Eighty odd years pass and once more a rapacious king, King John, outrages in the most flagrant manner the liberty of the Church. He buys bishoprics, and sells benefices, and seizes abbeys, and snatches churches, and farms the revenues of vacant sees,

with as rapacious a hand as William Rufus or the recreant Stephen. And then, through basest fear, he too promises (though his promise was as hollow as Stephen's) the provisions of the charter of Henry I., particularly that the Church of God *should be free.* And it was this provision that became the famous provision of Magna Charta. Therefore we repeat :

The phrase "that the English Church shall be free" meant that it was to be *free* from the clutch of an avaricious king ; free from interference in the matter of properties, privileges, and dignities; free from interference as regards lay investiture ; free, in one word, from the royal tyranny.

It did *not* mean, all subsequent history proves that it *could* not mean, that the Church of England was to be free from the Church of Rome. On the contrary, it really meant that the Church of England was free from the King of England to be free for the Pope of Rome.

From the papal standpoint, it meant anything but freedom. It meant that it was to be the slave of the Papacy, and the events of the next few years showed this, for it is a significant fact that one of the most ultramontane of the archbishops of Canterbury, Boniface, pronounced a fearful malediction on all who should violate the provisions of Magna Charta (Perry, i. 355).

XXXII. *But surely the spirit which animated Langton and the barons in their resistance of the tyrannising king was akin to that which afterwards aroused the strenuous resistance of English Churchmen to the insolent claims of the Papacy ?*

True.

It was the spirit of British liberty and national

independence. But the Pope's hold on England is as yet too strong for any national, or even ecclesiastical, protest to be severely entertained. Already, as we have seen, the feeling of resistance has been experienced (*see* Green's "Hist. Eng. People," i. 249). The action of the Pope in John's reign may have opened the people's eyes a little to the meaning of the Papacy, even though it did not to the meaning of Popery. But it is not till a later reign that the first beginnings of a really healthy spirit of Protestantism are manifested in England, and English churchmen come out clearly and boldly in defiance of the growing claims of the Roman See.

It was in the reign of Henry III. (1216–1272) that the Papacy began to make altogether unprecedented exactions. The expenses of the Roman Court grew heavier, or as the Pope put it, the Church grew poorer, and demands for money were made in the most unblushing way in the various kingdoms. It was only what was to be expected if their theory was true. As far as England was concerned, the Papal demands were outrageous, in fact, little else than robbery; and if it had not been for the fact that Henry III. was a poor tool of Rome they would never have been made. The Pope asked a certain definite revenue to be paid in from the kingdom of England, and as a bribe for confirming a certain nominee of the king for primate, actually demanded one-tenth of all the revenues of the land to be sent to Rome. Papal legates, Italian agents, and harpies of various degrees of impertinence, preyed upon the Church in the name of the Holy Father, until the very name of Pope began to stink in the nostrils of Englishmen.

The revolt soon began in earnest. Murmurs were followed by curses, and curses by resistance. English-

men openly used threats of vengeance, and in some cases armed themselves in revolt. If Innocent III. did lade the English realm with a heavy yoke, Gregory IX. added to his yoke; Innocent chastised it with whips, but Gregory chastised it with scorpions. The Church of Rome, the mother and mistress of the Churches, is fast becoming a huge horse-leech with two daughters crying, Give, give; the legate and the friar (Milner's "Ch. Hist.," 576). The Pope, though called the holy father, and the shepherd of the sheep, was in reality a hireling, a thief, and a robber. He cared not for the sheep. He carried the bag as a thief, and as a thief "he came for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." If a prophetical interpretation can be given to our Saviour's words, the first and eleventh and twelfth verses of the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John can truly be applied to Pope Gregory VIII. and his successor, Pope Innocent IV.

Englishmen would not have been flesh and blood if they had endured it. By the middle of the thirteenth century the Papal exactions became so outrageous that some of the most devoted allies of Rome were disgusted; and when the Pope's assessments mounted up to pretty nearly a-half of the clerical revenues, the very clergy protested against the thing as unheard of and utterly disgraceful. Mathew Paris (quoted by Perry, i. 345) says that the revenue of the Roman ecclesiastics in England was three times as great as that of the king himself.

XXXIII. *It was the outrageous injustice then, the manifest wickedness of the Papal system of taxation and intrusion, which gave the initial impetus to the spirit of Protestantism in England?*

Yes.

A state of affairs had come which could not in the nature of things continue long. Tyrants and tyrannies have their bounds. When they rise highest and swell most ambitiously, they are nearest falling. The insolence of their demands drives even slaves to rebellion. In like manner the proud spiritual pretensions of the successor of Peter, the multiplication of superstitions and vain ceremonial, the excess of ritual, and the paucity of piety, insured an inevitable reaction. A double revolt against Rome is about to follow ; against the tyranny first, against her errors afterwards.

It was at this juncture of the Church that the first real Protestant of the Church of England before the Reformation appeared.

Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, was a man whom all English Churchmen should delight to honour. He was the first of that hero band of spiritually enlightened men in the medieval age of the Church who perceived the real significance of the Papacy, and the unscripturalness of the position of the Pope of Rome. Though somewhat of a radical, and in the main a political or ecclesiastical remonstrant rather than an evangelical reformer, he arrests our attention as well by the valour of his utterances, as by his loyalty to conscience and to Scripture.

His opposition at the first (he became Bishop of Lincoln, A.D. 1235), was simply against the Papal intrusion of foreign ecclesiastics, and the scandalous exorbitance of the Papal taxes. The mischief and the ruin brought by the Romish religion was unperceived ; it was the mischief and the ruin wrought by Roman tax-gatherers that troubled him. He does not seem to have thought of the inconsistency either of Popery or the Pope. It was Rome's tyranny that

arrested his mind. Not till years afterwards did he seem to realise the abyss of Rome's idolatry. The idea of the clergy generally was that all the Churches in Christendom, as regards care and supervision, *belonged to the Lord Pope* by the right of Peter's Christ-given commission, but not as if all their property belonged to him to dispose of as he pleased. And this was probably Grosseteste's idea. For even in 1245, when taxed by the king for being on the Pope's side, and collecting some of his unwarranted levies, he defended himself by saying: "I am impelled to do this by the command of *our Lord the Pope, whom not to obey* is as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry."

The first thing that seems to have awakened the latent spirit of reform in Grosseteste was his natural common sense and his instinct of English justice. It happened not long after this that the Pope laid the last straw on the camel's back, and made a heavier exaction than ever. The result was that the man who in 1245 had posed as Pope's tax-collector, in 1247 firmly and not over-respectfully resisted the demand of two friars who demanded in the name of the Pope six thousand marks. "Friars," he said, "with all reverence to his holiness, this demand is as dishonourable as it is unpracticable. It touches the whole body of the clergy and the people. It would be absurd for us to comply with it before the sense of the whole kingdom is taken."

His eyes were being opened. The next year in virtue of letters obtained at no little expense from Rome, he began the work of reforming abuses in religious orders, and his eyes were opened a little more. Their iniquities and hypocrisies were simply revolting to an honest soul. The shepherds were not

only friends of the wolves, they were wolves themselves. Their abominations and corruptions were open to the eyes of heaven. The monasteries were whited sepulchres, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness; the clerics were outwardly pious, but inwardly full of hypocrisy and iniquity. And the worst feature was that they knew it perfectly well themselves, and were not one whit abashed. Nay, they did all these things with authority. They were supported by the head of the Church himself. Disgusted but resolved, this Elijah of England's Church proceeds to the court of Rome, which had its seat then at Lyons.

The sermon or discourse which Grosseteste there delivered to the Pope is one of the most remarkable deliverances in the history of the Church. It was one of the noblest utterances ever delivered by man. The hour has not yet come for the re-establishment of the Church of God upon the evangelical basis, but the action and words of the English bishop show that there is in England, at least, one man who is not afraid to beard the very lion of Rome in his den, and reprove the wild boar for his ravaging of Christ's vineyard. "The cause," said he, "of the flagitious practices of the clergy, and the corruptions of the Church, *is this court of Rome*, which not only does not try to stop these abominations, but perpetuates them by the appointment not of shepherds but of destroyers of men, and by delivering those souls for which the Son of God was willing to die to the mercy of ravening wolves and bears." And he concludes by a prediction, incredible almost for the times, that if any of the occupants of the Roman See were so far to put on the garment of the world as to command anything

opposed to the precepts of Christ, that *any who should obey him would separate themselves from Christ and the Church* and the Pope as Christ's *true* representative, and that in case there would be a general obedience given to such a departure from the path, *there would be a true and complete apostasy* (Milner, "Church History," 575; Perry, i. 343).

Grosseteste returned to his diocese and pursued unweariedly his labours, a terror to evil-doers and the praise of them that did well. It is said that for a time he was suspended by the Pope. If he was, he did not mind it much, for he went on exercising his episcopal functions in the same quiet but efficient manner. In 1253 the Pope attempted his last piece of violence with the noble bishop, imperiously ordering him to induct as one of the Lincoln canons a young Italian nephew of his. The Pope evidently wanted to test Grosseteste. It was a gross piece of injustice, and the answer he got is a fine example of the stalwart English defiance of a foreigner's impertinence. The epistle, though probably not addressed to the Pope personally, was a trenchant impeachment of the Papal system. In fact, at times an awful doubt seems to be wrestling in Grosseteste's mind, and his words appear to show that he hardly knows whom he is addressing—the head of the Church of Christ, the centre of Catholic unity, and Christ's visible representative in His holy Apostolic See; or Antichrist himself, the murderer and destroyer of souls, the medieval embodiment of apostasy and departure from the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the main it is couched in respectful language and expresses strong protestations of the absolute authority of the Roman See, but it contains also lan-

guage that involves the very essence of the principles of the Reformation, and the genius of Protestantism. His very obedience to the Holy See, as the representative of the religion of Jesus Christ and His Apostles, compels him to protest against the abuse of that religion. "No one," he asserted, "who is truly loyal to the Apostolic See" (he appears to mean to the Holy See as the ideal or representative body of Christ, *as it should be*), "could obey commands of such a character as the Pope now imposes, from whatever quarter they come, even if seconded by the highest order of angels; on the contrary, he ought with his whole might to oppose them. By reason, therefore, of the very obedience which I owe to the Apostolic See, from my love of union with it, I *refuse to obey* the things contained in the said letter, because they tend most evidently to the sin which I have mentioned, abominable to the Lord Jesus Christ, and most pernicious to the human race, and are altogether opposed to the holiness of the Apostolic See, and are contrary to Catholic unity" (Perry, i. 347, 348). "I oppose these things and rebel against them."

This language is significant. It marks a new epoch in the Church. It is the first definite adoption by an individual of what we now call a Protestant position. It cannot be called a protest of *the Church*, for the Church of England, as a Church, is held fast in the bondage of Romish ignorance. But it shows that a brighter day is coming. It is the small cloud as big as a man's hand that is the herald of a great change. The excommunicated body of Grosseteste will soon moulder in the grave, and many will rejoice that the voice of the troubler of Israel is silenced. But the spirit of Grosseteste will not die. A prophet has

arisen; yea, more than a prophet; the forerunner of a noble line of reformers and martyrs.

XXXIV. *It has been asserted, however, that it is a mistake to suppose that Grosseteste was one of the precursors of the Reformation, and that he can hardly be reckoned a Protestant or evangelical reformer. What is the reason of this?*

It is true that Robert Grosseteste was not in the reformed sense an evangelical Protestant. In his Church views he was little distinguished from the mass of Romanists (Milner, 573, 577).

His mind does not seem to have grasped the falsity of the Romish system. The Papal exactions were his chief objects of denunciation. As to the Romish religion, it was held by him with conviction, and though he attacked certain Romish abuses, he does not appear to have even discerned the unscripturalness of the system as a whole. But, though this was the case, it is equally certain that one can discern in this remarkable man some of the fundamental principles of the Reformation. They were in germ, perhaps, and most imperfectly developed. Yet they were there.

There was, first and most important of all, the recognition of the supremacy of Scripture. His denunciation of the sin of popes and the wickedness of prelates and priests, is based on the fact that all these things are contrary to the teaching of the Holy Word of God, and that all the apostolical letters and papal bulls and *non-obstante* clauses and Roman decrees in the world, are nothing against the plain words of God's truth, the Bible. Grosseteste may not have said this in so many words.

But when in that famous letter to the Pope, through

his emissaries, he quoted Holy Scripture as his authority for the impeachment of even the representatives of Christ Himself, he was putting into operation a principle that afterwards through Wycliffe, and later on through the noble army of the Reformers, was not only to free the Church from the Papacy but to restore it to the primitive foundation of the Apostolical Church. The first of the principles of the Reformation is: The Word of God is superior to popes, traditions, councils (Art. vi., xx., xxi.). We must obey Christ and His word rather than man. It was this principle of the superiority of the authority of Scripture to that of the Church which Grosseteste, however imperfectly, championed.

In his assuming the right of remonstrance and even defiance against the Pope, Grosseteste indicated another great principle of the Reformation—the duty of a man to obey his conscience, and the right of a Christian to what is generally known as private judgment. That Grosseteste did not perceive the greatness of the principle of which, perhaps, he was unconsciously the advocate, may be freely conceded. But in his clear and outspoken testimony against the dictator of Christendom, and especially in his idea that obedience to an erring Church and an apostate Pope would be separation from Christ, and that separation from a false Church would not only not be schism, but would be a means of bringing out the true Church (Perry, i. 343; *cf.* Jackson, "On the Church," pp. 120 *et sqq.*), and above all in his famous argument that unity with an apostate Pope involves disunion or separation from the Holy Catholic Church, and that separation from such an apostate representative of Christ would be the means of preserving true

union with the Catholic Faith and Church, Grosseteste was prophetically formulating the position which three centuries afterwards was assumed by the Church of England as its reason for separation from the Roman, and so-called Catholic, unity.

Grosseteste, beyond question, was the advocate also of personal, as opposed to mere ecclesiastical or formal, religion. Here again is an evidence of the genius of the principles of the Reformation. His teachings on the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart (Art. xiii.), the need of personal faith in Christ (Art. xi.), the practical life of godliness (Art. xii.), the impotence of the human will, and the gift of willingness from God (Art. x.), prove that Grosseteste had anticipated through his devotion to Christ and the indrinking of His spirit, the fundamental evangelical principles of the Reformed Church of England. He imperfectly grasped them, and they lay buried beneath a mass of Romish superstitions. But still they were there (Milner's "Church History," pp. 578, 579). They were the germ, the seed. In Bradwardine they will become the blade; in Wycliffe the ear; and through Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, the full corn in the ear.

Many years must pass before the work will be accomplished. Kings will reign and die. Reformers will grasp the truth, and Romish English Churchmen oppose its spread. The tide will ebb and flow in progress and reaction. But surely and steadily throughout three centuries, the principles will work, until England's Church becomes free in deed and in truth. Edward III. and Henry VIII., as the successors of the Conqueror and Langton, will champion the cause of national liberty and ecclesiastical independence. Bradwardine, and Wycliffe, and Cranmer,

will carry on the nobler work of evangelical instruction, and the day will come when those Scriptural principles which Grosseteste so dimly and partially apprehended, shall be established as the formal teaching of the Church of England.

XXXV. *Did the principles of Protestantism gain much ground in the Church immediately after the death of Grosseteste?*

No. They did not.

Grosseteste died in 1253. And for almost a century afterwards the history of the English Church is unmarked by any peculiarly striking features. The great epochs of the world generally spring from individuals. The pivotal movements of history turn on the personality of some great strong man. Until the rise of Wycliffe and Edward the Third, no one of any particular power arose as a history maker in the Church. Amongst the bishops there were here and there men of piety and patriotism, but they were few and far between, and there were none of extraordinary force. Simon de Montfort was a vigorous nationalist, and a strong opponent of papal exactions (Green, "Hist. Eng. People," 276–278); but the times were not yet ripe for the assertion of the great principles for which he so valiantly contended.

It was from the ecclesiastical standpoint a somewhat low-ebb age. The Church was thoroughly Romanised, and the clergy thoroughly Romish. Henry III. (1216–1272) was a poor creature, a second John; and Edward II. (1307–1327) little better. Until the time of Edward III. very little occurred that is worthy of record.

Two things, however, may be referred to: the resistance of the Church clergy to Papal demands

for their money, and their strenuous attempts to secure exemption from taxation. The clergy of the Church of England at this time were simply a body of Romish priests; and they were worldly, covetous, and greedy of gain. Peccham, an Archbishop of Canterbury of that day, testifies that they just lived for worldly gain and money, heaping benefice upon benefice (Perry, i. 380). It is notorious that none are so keen about holding their possessions, and so quick to resent interference with their property as those who are unscrupulous in acquiring it. So when the Pope under the pretence of a holy crusade despatched an envoy to England in 1253 to raise money from the clergy of the English Church, there was a bitter revolt. The clergy objected to being robbed in that way, and made a formal protest in Parliament. In 1256 the demand was repeated, and they paid, under protest, an immense sum, on condition that no more claims were made by the Pope, a condition which His Holiness answered by sending an envoy with the powers of excommunication and interdict. He found that the best plan was to get the money first and to take the interdict off afterwards; and though the clergy drew up grievances, and formulated privileges, they had to yield. The death of Simon de Montfort at the battle of Evesham, 1265, left the clergy to the mercy of the King and the Pope, of whom it would be hard to tell which was the greater thief and robber. They were summoned before the Pope by the Legate, and made to pay large sums of money; and then the King came in, and took his share. Between them both the poor churchmen were well-nigh reduced to beggary.

XXXVI. *Then this action of the English clergy*

at this period in resisting the Pope is not to be taken as an evidence of their nationality and independence?

Hardly.

In one sense, of course, it is. It shows that they had some spirit left, and were not merely a poor herd of driven cattle, without mind, or will, or action. It is an evidence of some small degree of independence at any rate.

But beyond that the action of the clergy is not very significant. I must say I cannot attach to it the importance that Canon Perry does in his "Church History" when he refers to it as an evidence that the clergy were on the *national* side as against the King and Pope, and makes that the title of the eighteenth chapter of that work. To my mind their action simply shows that they were on *their own* side. They were as a body strongly ultramontane. They were at once Popish and Papal. But they were as a body also rapacious, and worldly, and as thieves and robbers, they strongly objected to being robbed in their turn by a bigger robber. That is all. There was no particular nationalism about their objecting to being fleeced by Italian agents. It was simply objection to robbery. Nor does their action throughout appear to have been inspired by any deep principle. There certainly is no indication of a profound conviction of great issues at stake as was the case in the protests of Grosseteste. While, therefore, it was an evidence of a certain vigour of character, and independence of spirit on the part of the clergy, and was also in the Providence of God an indirect preparation for the great national result that was to culminate later, their action can hardly be taken as a proof of an assertion of that great principle

of ecclesiastical independence which was afterwards vindicated by the Church of England.

The same characteristic explains also the strenuous attempts of the clergy to secure all exemption from taxation. During the reigns of Edward I. and Edward II., a battle royal on this subject was carried on between the clergy and the crown (Short's "History of the Ch. of Eng.," cap. ii. 66-70). It was a serious question. If all Church property was to be unremunerative, and bear no part of the burdens of the country, it would hinder national progress. The vast estates of the clergy, and their increasing wealth, would absorb the greater part of the land of the realm. The State insisted that Church property should not be so much dead matter, unproductive, and unprofitable, but that the State should have a voice both in its acquisition and its disposal. The statute of Mortmain (1279) is generally regarded as the victory of the King, or of the State, over the growing power of the clergy.

This was met not long after by a counter enactment from their lord the Pope, in his infamous bull, "Clericis Laicos," which set forth the principle that all the Church property in the world belonged to the Church,* and prohibited the clergy from paying any taxes, or the secular powers from exacting any revenue from either Churches or clergy on pain of excommunication.

Imperious as this enactment seemed, it was of little use in England. King Edward simply told them

* Robert de Kilwardby in 1274 is recorded to have openly told the Pope, "My Church, *i.e.* the Church of England, is your Church, and my possessions are your possessions; dispose, therefore, of my Church and of my properties as if they were yours." (Quoted Perry, i. 374.)

that bull or no bull they would have to pay. If they did not pay, he would take what he wanted without asking leave (Perry, 386, 387). He accordingly outlawed the clergy of Canterbury, and seized their available property, and though they kept up the fight for a while, they eventually found they had to submit.

But the action of the clergy throughout this struggle is the clearest possible demonstration of what even Canon Perry himself admits on a later page (p. 391), that they were as a body both "*disloyal* and *unnational*."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY; THE GROWTH OF NATIONAL PROTESTANTISM.

The fourteenth century the golden era of the Church before the Reformation—Providential preparations of England for that event—The growing exactions of the Papacy—The growing power of England as a nation—The decline of the Papal prestige towards the end of this century—National feeling in the reign of Edward III.—The case of Anthony Beck, Bishop of Norwich—The first statute of Provisors—The Crown *versus* the Pope—Provisors a sign of the incipient Protestantism of the English Parliament, rather than of the English Church—The statute of Præmunire, 1353—Provisors and Præmunire not to be taken as signs of national *Church* independence.

WE now approach one of the most important eras of Church history, the fourteenth century.

The fourteenth century is the golden age of reform before the Reformation.

It is the age of Edward III., the upholder of England's national rights against the Pope; and of John Wycliffe, the defender of evangelical truth against Popery. It did not witness the Reformation of the Church; the time was not yet come for that. But it witnessed the rise of two strong representatives of the two great branches of Church reform which were necessary in England before the Church of England could be reformed; a king, or one moving in the politico-ecclesiastical sphere, who should attack the Papacy with fearlessness, and a

priest, or one moving in the spiritual sphere, who should be taught by the Spirit to expose the doctrinal errors of Popery and unfold the elements of Scriptural truth.

One cannot fail to recognise in the events of the latter part of the thirteenth and the earlier part of the fourteenth centuries, the hand of Providence preparing the State and the Church for this great epoch of initial reform. On the one hand, the excesses of the Papal exactions fanned to a greater height the flame of national resistance. On the other, the growing prestige of the nation enabled it to successfully revolt. During the latter part of the thirteenth century the Papacy waxed prouder, and became more tyrannical than ever. Always oblivious of the people's welfare, the Popes never forgot their covetous claims. They claimed annates, and Peter's pence, and reservations, and expectantiæ, and commendæ, and jus spoliorum (the plunderer's claim to booty), and tithes, and indulgences, and many things besides; and if they did not get it, they threatened bulls, and excommunications, and all sorts of fearsome things. Boniface VIII. out-Hildebranded Hildebrand. He put upon the Papal tiara a second crown in token of spiritual *and secular* rule, adopted the emblem of the two swords, and issued in 1296 that infamous bull already referred to, known as the "Clericis Laicos," by which all laymen who exacted contributions from the clergy were excommunicated, and the Pope practically claimed all the Church property in the world. After all it was only the formulation in so many words of a theory which they had been practising for generations (Kurtz, 464). Of course, all this would have but one result. The heart of England was being prepared for

a tremendous revolt, and when the man should arise to captain it, the hour would come.

Meanwhile another thing was taking place which in the providence of God would effect great things in conjunction with this rising temper, and that was the growing greatness of the English nation. The tiny island kingdom of the northern seas is no longer the home of despised and barbarian tribes. It is the realm of a strong and liberty-loving people. England has become a nation. Its name is being identified with the ideas of aggressiveness, valour, independence, and law. The masterful blood of the Norman has mingled with that of the stalwart and patriotic Saxon, and the blend has produced the Englishman, the English language, the English constitution, and the English nation. Slowly but surely the germs of national greatness have begun to sprout. The sense of English liberty evolves the British constitution. The love of freedom builds up the great securities of national law, the right of the individual to freedom from arbitrary taxation on the part of the king, and of the nation on the part of any foreign power. The masterful sense of power provides a bulwark for defence, and animates to victory in aggressive war. The name of England becomes feared at home and abroad, by sea and land. The great kingdom of France is humbled. Italy and Spain become aware that a nation of no insignificant power is rising beyond the dividing sea, and even the Mohammedan powers have felt the prestige of the British foe. Many and great are the battles that will yet be fought at home and abroad for constitutional liberty and national supremacy. Yet it may safely be said, that in the fourteenth century all the elements of national greatness which

have since lifted England to the highest rank were not only in existence but in operation. The ideas of the rights of the people, and the liberty of the subject, of the limitation of the monarchy, and the responsibility of Parliament and the servants of the Crown, were clearly understood by the nation at large, though centuries may elapse before they are fully possessed; and the instincts of stalwart defiance and stubborn valour are as characteristic of Crecy as of Waterloo (Green's "Hist. of England," i. 394; ii. 6).

These two things then synchronised in England, the growing greatness of the Papal pride, and the growing greatness of England's power. There could be but one result. A collision would come, and there would be war to the death.

What made this more inevitable in the providence of God was the marked decline of the Papal prestige during the removal of the Papal chair from Rome to Avignon (1309–1377). Through this period, which the Romans call the Babylonish exile, the Papacy was slavishly under the power of France, while its tone was proportionally arrogant to England. Its living was loose. Its tone was earthly. Its character was sensual. So dissolute was its living, so luxurious its pomp, that the property of every Catholic nation was looked upon as its lawful spoil. Wars were incessantly carried on, for which Rome was ever demanding money. Its greed was outrageous. And what touched England to the quick was the exasperating fact that the money demanded by the Pope, was handed over to the French to help them to fight against England. The sting was really intolerable. The nation had no alternative but protest.

Nothing, however, was done. The predecessor of

Edward III. was but a poor creature at best. With little spirit and no power, Edward II. let Popes and primates do almost what they wished. The Church of England and the State of England together were entirely Rome-ruled. If it was not the Pope fleecing the people in association with the king, it was the Pope fleecing the people with the indifference of the king.

Thus, in the great providence of the King of kings, events were preparing, gradually but surely, for the crisis of the reign of Edward III. The nation was being prepared for the declaration of liberty; the Church was being prepared for the exposition of error.

XXXVII. *What was the chief effect of the reign of Edward III. as regards the relation of the English Church to the Papacy?*

The chief effect of Edward's reign in this respect was the reanimation of a strong spirit of patriotic or national defiance to Rome's encroachments.

In the year 1327 Edward the III. ascended the throne of England. Of indifferent personal character, he was in one way, nevertheless, a typical Englishman. He looked down upon foreigners. He was impatient of interference. He believed in English supremacy. It was this contempt of foreigners and resentment of foreign influence, not any recognition of the evil of Popery, or the spiritual inconsistency of the Papal system, that led him and his people to adopt those great legal enactments which inaugurated what may be called the politico-national Protestantism of the Church of England.

The reader is once more requested at this point to carefully observe the double use of the word Protestant; the Protestantism which indicates the

resistance of a Church or a nation, or both, to a tyrannical ruler on political or ecclesiastical grounds, and the Protestantism which indicates the resistance of churchmen or a church to the doctrinal system known as Popery. Though the indications of the latter have as yet been few and far between in the now Romanised Church of England, there have been numerous instances of the former; but in the reign of Edward III., the protests assume such a direct and national-ecclesiastical character as to mark a real epoch in the history of the Church.

Edward had not been long on the throne before he found that things were in such a state that either he or the Pope would have to give way. The Church was completely Romanized. That troubled no one particularly, for English churchmen were still unenlightened. What did trouble them was that the Church was almost completely in the hands of the Pope. He not only reserved to himself the right of appointing whom he pleased to English bishoprics; he claimed the right also to appoint to abbacies, deaneries, canonries, and every other ecclesiastical office. All sorts of Italians and Frenchmen were presented to English livings, and coolly informed the English patrons that they had the authority of the Pope, and that objectors would have to answer for their temerity at the Court of Rome. English benefices were bought and sold at Rome. The most trifling ecclesiastical matters were ordered to Rome for settlement, without regard to time or cost.

The state of things was simply intolerable. First of all, the noblemen began to chafe. Then the people became more and more alienated from the Church. They cared little for these foreign intruders;

and the foreigners cared less for them. And at last the king himself was aroused.

XXXVIII. *What was the occasion of the protest, and what form did it take?*

The action of a would-be Bishop of Norwich, one Anthony Beck, who proceeded to Rome for the Pope's confirmation to the bishopric, was the immediate occasion of the protest. Edward III. at once wrote a right strong Protestant letter to the Pope, in which he said that the King of England, not the Pope of Rome, was the man to confirm the election and present the bishop-elect, and that Englishmen, not foreigners, were the proper persons to be bishops and pastors.

There was, as might have been expected, no answer to this letter.

Shortly after, Parliament takes up the matter, and a second remonstrance, respectful, but very firm, is addressed to the Pope. King Edward then takes the bull by the horns, and by a royal mandate forbids the authorities at Rome to present any foreigner to these English benefices, or the men presented to accept them, or the English people to receive them. The sheriffs were empowered to imprison all Frenchmen and Italians and other foreign ecclesiastics who should come into the realm of England with their bulls and processes and other instruments whatsoever. The agents of a couple of cardinals having been ignominiously treated in virtue of this, the Pope got very angry, but without effect. The king still stood to his rights, and retorted with another right Protestant letter (Perry, i. 406), a very Magna Charta of English Church liberties.

Thus it came to pass in the strange working of the

Providence of God, that a matter that was mainly a personal struggle between royal and Papal ambition, and was largely based on the hatred of Englishmen to Italians and Frenchmen (Green's "Hist. English People," i. 407–409; Kurtz, "Church Hist.," i. 466), grew in such national interest that it was made the subject of parliamentary action, and the mandates of the king became the statutory provision of the nation.

In the Parliament of 1351 the matter was taken up by Parliament, and the law was passed which has since been known as the first Statute of Provisors. It provided that all elections to elective benefices should be free; that is that they should not be in the hands of the Pope, but in the hands of the patrons to whom they appertained; that if the Pope were to violate this principle, and insist upon presenting one of his creatures to any bishopric or benefice, that the benefice was to go to the crown; and that if any persons in any way should attempt to procure reservations or provisions by bringing these provisional letters from Rome, they were to be fined or imprisoned.

Of course this statute was in many respects a dead letter. The Pope paid no attention to it. The bishops and abbots systematically evaded it (Stubbs, iii. 329), regarding it as rather a clever device whereby their lord the King out-generalled their lord the Pope, for the clergy as a body were of course on the Pope's side. Therefore, it cannot be reckoned, as we shall presently show, as a sign of the Protestantism of the Church. If *the Church* were represented by her spiritual rulers and clergy it was rather a sign of the opposite, for the spiritual lords refused to ratify it. But it was a sign and a very remarkable sign of the

Protestantism of the nation. It was an index of the remarkable growth of the spirit of national religious liberty. It was the first great national attempt to limit the temporal power of the Pope. If it was not a protest of the Church of England *as a Church* against the Church of Rome, it was the first parliamentary protest of the realm of England against the encroachments of Rome and the pretensions of the Pope. As an expression of the national sentiment on the subject of the Papal supremacy in the fourteenth century, it is difficult to over-estimate its importance.

XXXIX. *Was the Statute of Provisors the only Protestant enactment of the reign of Edward III.?*

No.

Two years after, in 1353, it was followed by another anti-Papal measure, the Act of Præmunire, an equally remarkable enactment.

The Statute of Provisors was bold in language; but unfortunately it was weak in operation. The barons and gentry were not slow to avail themselves once more of their rights to control the benefices in their gift, and to hurl the statute at all bearers of provisional letters from Rome. But they found to their chagrin that their resistance to Rome only involved them in further complications. So far from the Provisors Statute securing them, it brought them within the power of the Pope. For, according to time-honoured usage, it was the custom of Rome to summon whom she pleased to the Papal court, the judgments of which over-rode the sentences of all national courts. And the Pope, who cared less for the enactments of an upstart English tribunal called a parliament, than a Gallio for the questions of a Jewish synagogue, proceeded to summon the English

patrons who dared to refuse the Papal nominees to answer for their temerity in Rome itself (Green's "Hist. Eng. People," i. 444).

Of course such a state of things could not last. The confusion was intolerable. It was evident that the work done by the Provisors Statute was only half done, and that further legislation was necessary if Englishmen were to be secure from the Papal encroachments. The question had to be settled thoroughly. The question was whether the king's court was to be the final court of appeal for Englishmen, or whether there was to be an appellate jurisdiction at Rome. If, after having cases settled in England, men were to have the appeal to Cæsar, then Englishmen must cease to call themselves free. The Pope, not the king, was the head of the realm.

The Statute of Præmunire was England's settlement of that question.

It was in effect the extinction of the system of Papal appeals. It simply but plainly stated that English affairs were to be tried in English courts, and it declared that the judgment of English courts were to be considered final. When a man was judged or acquitted in the king's court, that was an end of the matter. It was a penal offence for any one to attempt to try him in any foreign court, or for the Pope to condemn one whom the king had acquitted, or to acquit one whom the king had condemned.

Considering the date it was a remarkable enactment, and it shows how in the great providence of God the spirit of English liberty was employed as one of the main instruments for the emancipation of the nation from the fetters of Papacy. No wonder that it excited horror at Avignon, and that the Roman

pontiff anathematised it as a base and iniquitous enactment. The Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire are as red-letter days in the Protestantism of England before the Reformation. Though two centuries are to pass before the emancipation is complete, the foundation stones of liberty are now being well and truly laid.

XL. *But did these statutes, valuable as they were, merely indicate a political or national Protestantism? Had they nothing to do with the Protestantism of the Church?*

In the doctrinal sense, No.

We repeat. Neither of these statutes had anything whatever to do with doctrine, or literally with the Protestantism of the English Church. In the strict sense of the word they were not *Church* enactments at all. They were simply the State's defence of the Church; the people's defence of their ruler; the king's defence of his rights. They were popular defences of English privileges. They were the efforts of the Parliament to protect the Church from foreigners. In one word, they were declarations of English independence.

As far as the Church was concerned it is certain that the Church regarded them with aversion. Though purely political measures, they had in them a savour of independence so detestable to Rome, that on a later occasion the representative heads of the English Church, the Archbishop of York and the Archbishop of Canterbury, protested against the Act of Provisors, as subverting the liberties of Holy Church (the Holy Church of Rome, that is), and their duty to the Pope. So real was the Pope's headship of the Church in England, that for a

century or more after the passing of these Acts, he continued to fill the bishoprics and benefices as he pleased, and to promulgate his bulls and ordinances throughout the land. And all through this period, as was said before, the clergy as a body were on the side of the Pope (Milner, p. 605).

From the doctrinal standpoint these laws are nothing; and, as a proof of the rising Protestantism of the Church, they are valueless. They simply stand as evidences to the great spirit of English independence, and show that the nation, as a whole, is beginning to grasp the falsity of the position of the pretended vicar of Christ.

XLI. *But do they not prove the* independence *of the English Church? Do they not show that the Church of England was independent of the Church of Rome?*

Not at all.

The Church of England was at that time doctrinally and corporally ONE with the holy Church of Rome. In doctrine and discipline they were in all things identical. The archbishops and bishops of England were bishops of the holy Roman Church. The cardinals in England, as we shall afterwards show by proofs, were cardinals of the Church of Rome. The Pope was the head of the Church. Holy Church determined ordinances, and doctrines and pilgrimages, and — gainsay it who will — holy Church simply meant the holy Church of Rome, which then, as now, claimed to be the holy Catholic Church, of which the English Church was an integral part.

The idea of the Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire making the Church of England an independent Church in the sense in which the Church of England

is now an independent Church, never entered anybody's head. The laity as well as the clergy regarded the Pope as the head of the Church (Perry, i. 513).

These laws only concerned questions of liberties and rights, the technicalities of instituting ecclesiastics, and the details of courts of appeal. In fact, it is a question whether many of the Lords or the Commons thought of the Præmunire as anything else than a vote for their king rather than for a French Pope, and of the Provisors as anything beyond a transfer of Church patronage from pontiff to king.

The day *is* coming when the Church of England, as a Church, will declare her independence of Rome, and not only defy her by articles, but separate bodily from her as a national Church. But that day is a long way off yet. Before that day can come the minds of Englishmen will have to be opened to the discernment of falsehood and truth, and an education in apostolic principles achieved which will take two centuries of time. For it is certain that the promulgation of even such Protestant enactments as the Præmunire and Provisors would have done little towards the dislodgment of the power of Popery in England if it had not been for another very important factor in the preparation of the nation for the Reformation, the work of spiritually minded and enlightened men, who should expose error and set forth truth, and especially the labours of the greatest of the pre-Reformation reformers, John Wycliffe.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH AND JOHN WYCLIFFE.

The distinct peculiarity of Wycliffe's work — The two principles of Wycliffe's reforming zeal — Personal conversion, Scriptural enlightenment — The three phases of his work: political, moral, doctrinal—Wycliffe's first publicity in 1366 —The claim of Urban V.—His treatise "De Dominio Divino"—Wycliffe unjustly censured for the political phase of his career—The state of morals in the English Church — The accusation that Wycliffe was a Socialist —Wycliffe enters distinctly upon his career as a doctrinal reformer—He is summoned for heresy— The trial comes to nothing—The Papal schism fortifies Wycliffe in his antipapal position — He attacks transubstantiation on two grounds —Wycliffe did not retract, though some of his expressions scholastic and obscure—Wycliffe's tracts and Bible—He denounces Roman practices and doctrines—Wycliffe the greatest of reformers.

JOHN WYCLIFFE was, beyond doubt, one of the greatest men of his age. Its foremost scholar, he became its most influential teacher; in insight vivid, in living holy, in preaching fervent, in organisation active, in labours unwearying.

He was a man sent from God; the man for the times. His life and work must truly be regarded as a direct proof of the providential disposals of the great Head of the Church. He seems to have been purposely raised up to do a work that only could have been performed in the age in which he lived by a man of his varied attainments and official character. The great need of the day was evangelical enlightenment. The spirit of political independence of Rome was already strongly developed. The

measures of William the Norman, and Langton, and Grosseteste, to say nothing of the national character, would insure its further growth. But of evangelical knowledge there was little or none. Yet the age was ripe for it. The people who had so long groped in the darkness were beginning to feel that it was darkness. The nobles were weary of clerical misrule. The rulers and lawgivers were awakening to the inconsistency of Rome's position. The feeling of disgust at religious abuses was gradually awakening. The only thing that was needed was a man whose unquestioned intellectual supremacy would attract to his theories, whose recognised ecclesiastical standing would add weight to his doctrinal teaching. It was at this time that God raised up John Wycliffe, and brought into the political and ecclesiastical arena of the great thirteenth century, an English Churchman who was destined to be not merely the first of the reformers, but one who, for his influence both on English and Continental theology, was the greatest of them all.

XLII. *What was the distinctive peculiarity of Wycliffe's work?*

The distinctive peculiarity of the work of Wycliffe was neither its national devotedness nor its anti-papal zeal. It was neither the vigour of his exposure of abuses, nor the amazing valour of his defiance of the popes. It was something altogether different from this; something deeper and more real. It was rather the fact that he was the first of all Catholic Churchmen to discern the falsity of Rome's doctrinal position, and to boldly proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus.

Others, doubtless, had seen and known these things.

To the Cathari and the Waldenses, to Claude of Turin and Peter Waldo, it was given to understand through the Scriptures, not only the glory of the Gospel, but the corruptions and apostasy of the Church of Rome. But of Wycliffe it may be distinguishingly asserted, that he was the first really great and enlightened advocate of the supremacy of the Scriptures, and the first great practical exposer of the falsity of the key-stone doctrines of the Roman Church. Others had done, and were doing, the political part of Protestant reform. Grosseteste had done it. Edward III. had done it. Parliament had done it, and would do it again. But the work of John Wycliffe was higher and deeper. Wycliffe's work was the complement of this. It was the indispensable other half, without which all the mere anti-papal legislation and anti-vice preaching in the world would never have freed the Church from Popery. It was the shaking, not merely of Papal pretensions, but of Papal falsities. It was the impeachment, not merely of vices, but of errors. It was the propagation, not merely of negative protests, but of evangelical principles.

XLIII. *Then it is not correct to speak of Wycliffe's reformatory work as if it were merely a reform of morals in the Church, or a mere correction of abuses?*

No.

This is a great mistake. It is the mistake that makes many modern Churchmen completely misunderstand the whole Reformation in England. They appear to think that it was a reform *in* the Church. Instead of that it was a doctrinal reform *of* the Church. Wycliffe's work, while largely dealing with existing abuses and the exposure of Papal and

clerical vices, derived its chief strength from its positive features. It was the exposure of doctrinal errors widely received as Gospel truths, of Papal falsities long believed as Catholic verities, and the dauntless declaration of the primitive teaching of the apostles of Christ. Other men had whispered; he cried aloud. Others had spoken in the secrecy of closets; he proclaimed it on the housetops. Others had denounced the vices of popes, he denounced the very foundation-principles of the Papal Church system. It is this that constituted Wycliffe not merely the morning star but the rising sun of the Reformation (Martineau, "Ch. Hist.," p. 442; Green's "Hist. Eng. People," i. 446).

It is noteworthy, also, that the reforming zeal of this great man may be traced to the two great fountain heads from which later sprang the final movement of the reformation of the Church of England; personal conversion and Scriptural enlightenment. It was his knowledge of a personal Saviour in the newness of life that was the secret of Wycliffe's greatness. He loved Christ. He knew Whom he had believed. He spake that which he knew. He loved the Word of God; and that path of life which he had found therein he determined all his life long to make known to others.

Thus the reformation of the Church sprang from the Scriptural illumination of a man taught by the Spirit. Outwardly and politically the nation was weary of the yoke of Rome. Internally and reasonably the people were disgusted with the lives of the clerics, and the degradation of religion. It was a great matter to rid the Church of the Papal exactor. It was an equally great matter to rid the Church of

immoralities and crying abuses. A man of the world could move anti-Papal measures. And any man of earnest life could declaim against the vices of the day in convent, court, and cloister. But the yoke of Romish bondage, the bondage of unscriptural ecclesiasticism, of idolatrous superstition, this was the greatest evil of them all. And he alone could see this, and remove this, whom the truth had made free, and the Holy Spirit through the understanding of the Holy Scriptures had enlightened. It is here that the great hand of God is made so wonderfully visible; not merely in the raising up of a man of such splendid patriotism, and colossal mental power, but, also, in the selection of a man who, by the devoutness of his Christian life, and strength of his will, and the depth of his convictions, would stand forth before the world as the apostle of truth, and the Apollyon of falsehood.

"Faithful found,
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor numbers, nor example, with him wrought,
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single."

XLIV. *Was Wycliffe's work from the commencement a work of spiritual and doctrinal reform?*

No.

The reforming work of Wycliffe in the fourteenth century was characterised very largely by the same features as the reformation of the Church of England in the sixteenth century. It not only sprang as that did from the personal enlightenment of the leader, or leaders; it had three distinct parts or movements.

The first was political; the second moral; the third doctrinal. Not only so, but the work of Wycliffe was an anticipation of the progress of the Reformation two centuries later in that these parts or movements followed very nearly in the same order.

First of all there came the political, or anti-papal stage, when the national Church spirit aroused itself in defiance of the pretensions and claims of the Pope. Then there followed the moral or anti-vice stage, when the infamous lives of monks and friars and ecclesiastics generally were arraigned for popular indignation. And last of all came the doctrinal or anti-error stage, when the cardinal doctrines of Popery, or the Roman system, were attacked, and the true doctrines of the Apostles of Christ were expounded. First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. First the removal of external obstructions; then the rectification of internal conditions; and then the reconstruction of foundation principles.

It was in the character of a national champion of the rights of the Sovereign and people of England that Wycliffe began his public career, treading in the steps of Langton, Grosseteste, and Fitzralph of Armagh.*

Born in Yorkshire in 1324, educated at Oxford, a doctor of divinity, a master of logic and philosophy, Wycliffe was about forty when he stepped into the arena as a Protestant Churchman. The air was full of the strife of tongues, and all England was aflame

* For an account of this remarkable man, sometimes called Richard Radulphus, see Mosheim, "Ecc. Hist.," ii. 378; Morley's "English Writers," v. 34.

at the time on account of the insolence of Pope Urban V. It was a bad time for a Pope to make demands on England for tribute money to Rome. Provisors and Præmunire had just been passed. Thirty-three years had gone by without a mention of it, and England was in a very different state from what it was in 1213, and Edward III. was a very different man from King John. But in 1366 Pope Urban V. made it, and summoning Edward III. to recognise him as legitimate sovereign of England, demanded the payment of the annual sum of a thousand marks as England's grateful tribute for the privilege of having such a spiritual blessing as the lordship of the Pope.

The answer of the Parliament was short enough. Neither King John nor any king could subject himself, his kingdom, or his people without their consent. They would not pay it.

But the episode was remarkable to us for the fact that it brought before England the man who was destined to become her great defender against Rome. The ablest man of his day intellectually, Wycliffe exposed the Roman pretensions with masterly force. He took the claims of Rome, and with relentless logic, tore them in pieces one by one. He showed that the exaction of a tribute by an alien was subversive of the primary principles of constitutional government. A tribute is, constitutionally speaking, a *quid pro quo.* It is given rightly only to him who can guarantee protection in return. This the Pope cannot grant. Therefore the State need not pay a subsidy. Going deeper he showed that the supreme and final lordship of the realm is neither in the King nor in the Pope, but in Christ, and Christ alone. That the Pope as

a man, subject to sin, has no control over that which is held for Christ. That the claim of a Pope to hold and control a kingdom is a clear violation of the spiritual principles of the kingdom of Christ (Green's "Hist. Eng. People," i. 445; D'Aubigné's "Reformation," v. 86).

These were daring words for 1366. And they were startling theorems. England was delighted. The whole kingdom rang with his propositions, and the name of Wycliffe was in every mouth. Preachers in the pulpit and politicians in Parliament alike were eager to employ his arguments. He found himself famous as it were in a day.

A year or two after this he brought out his famous treatise, "De Dominio Divino," in which he formulated the sublime propositions that all dominion is founded in God; that that power is granted by God not to one person, as the Papacy alleged, who is His alone vice-gerent, but to all; that the king is as much God's vicar as the Pope, the royal power as sacred as the ecclesiastical; that each individual Christian is himself a possessor of dominion held directly from God; that God Himself is the tribunal of personal appeal.

It is doubtful whether even Wycliffe himself perceived at that period the results of his reasoning, and the consequences of such tremendous principles. But whether he knew it or not, there seems to be truth in Green's statement ("Hist. of the English People," i. 447), that by this theory, which established a direct relation between man and God, he swept away the whole basis of a mediating priesthood, the very foundation on which the medieval Church was built.

At that time Wycliffe was thinking more of the Pope as a pretentious tribute-exactor, than of the Papacy as an apostate Christian system, and it was as a civil and national champion, perhaps, as much as a religious that he waged this warfare against Papal claims. Not that his religious convictions had nothing to do with his position, as one would infer almost from the way some have written about him. They had much to do with it. He was in no sense a mere politician. But the tone of his campaign at that time was political, rather than spiritual. And though it was as a member of the Church of England that he wrote and spoke, it was the independence of the crown, and the liberty of the people, rather than the independence of the clergy, and the nationality of the Church for which he was fighting.

From this time the Court, the Commons, and the country, as a whole, are on the side of Wycliffe. The friars and priests, the prelates and the Pope are, to a man, against him. Not long after (1374), he is sent as one of an ecclesiastical commission to Bruges to negotiate with the Pope's representatives. The results of the conference, on the whole, were not satisfactory to the people, for they were a compromise to the Pope's advantage. But one result must have been satisfactory to them, and that was that Wycliffe was from this time onwards a more determined opponent of the Pope than ever.

XLV. *Did Wycliffe continue long in this rôle of a national or political champion?*

No.

Little by little he seems to have abandoned the more political side of his work, becoming more and more absorbed in the spiritual or religious. As

D'Aubigné tersely puts it, he busied himself less and less about the kingdom of England and occupied himself more and more with the kingdom of Christ. And yet, it does seem a little hard, and a little narrow to censure Wycliffe, as some have done, for this politico-national phase of his career. Milner, for instance, in his chapter on John Wycliffe depreciates his character as a reformer on account of the political spirit which deeply infected his conduct, and hints that these worldly alliances and occupations seriously impugned the success of his labours. "Politics was the rock on which this great man split."

It is true Wycliffe did enter the political sphere and write as a citizen as well as an ecclesiastic. But we must remember the times. And we must remember the Divine law of development. The growth of the spiritual man, like the growth of the natural man, is a matter of time. Wycliffe did not spring in an instant to the full perfection of spiritual knowledge. He grew steadily, it is true. But the tree planted by the rivers of waters grows slowly, even as it grows surely. His knowledge at first was small, his perceptions dull. But what he knew he spake, and what he saw he declared. And it seems to have been the will of God that he was to be led in the first instance along the path of what might be called a mere political Protestantism. It was not the highest stage of religious or spiritual development. It was, it will doubtless be admitted by all, a lower path. It led him into questionable alliances and doubtful partnerships, just as many a godly evangelical of the Irish Church is identified in his anti-papal zeal with men who, for all their Protestantism, are utterly devoid of the Spirit of Christ. It yoked him with John of

Gaunt and Lord Percy, and that class of men. It threw him in with the great herd of the anti-clerical rabble, good, bad, and indifferent, some with base aims, some with high aims, but all glad to have in their fight against an alien Pope, and a purse-proud priesthood, the alliance of so illustrious a man as Wycliffe, the pride of Oxford, and the friend of the king.

But Wycliffe did not stay all his life in that path. Gradually the eyes of his mind being illumined, he turned to a truer work, not the examination of Papal claims and parliamentary rights, but the state of the Church of Christ, and the needs of the day. Without ceasing to be a patriot or a Protestant, he was led to a distinctly higher work. And that was the work of exposing the abuses and views which were rampant in the Church in that day.

It seems almost impossible for us to believe the stories which are told of the state of things in the Church of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. If they were told of ignorant Italians, or the degraded peasantry of France or Italy, it would be credible enough. But to be told that the lives, not merely of the English people, but of the bishops and clergy of the Church of England, were immoral and low, and wicked in the majority of instances, is hard to understand.

Yet the statements are established by multiplied and unimpeachable authorities. Churches abounded, religious houses were everywhere. Ecclesiastics of all sorts swarmed in city, town, and country. Crosses dotted every highway. Shrines attracted innumerable devotees. The worship of the Virgin, the worshipping and adoration of the saints, and of wayside images,

and relics, and the bones and clothing of departed saints, was everywhere indulged in. There was plenty of religion, that is, the Romish religion. But the lives, the lives of the clergy as a whole, were scandalous to a degree.

They were immersed in the most absolute worldliness. If there is any truth in contemporary evidence, and the witness of men of the day, it is certain that thousands of the priests of Holy Church, that is the Holy Roman Church, of which the Church of England was then a part, the professing successors of the apostles and teachers of the Christian religion were walking as enemies of the Cross of Christ. Their God was their belly. Their glory was in their shame. They lived wholly for the world. The dignitaries of the Church from the Pope downwards, were as pompous as Lucifer, and as world-loving as Demas. They were men of corrupted minds, bereft of the truth, looking upon religion as a way of gain. Religion was indeed a way of gain. It was the most paying thing of the age. They had the monopoly of merits, which had a splendid sale and commanded great prices until Luther broke up the demand. They fattened on the wealth of the land and waxed wanton. They were literally clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet, and were decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. Their luxury exceeded description. They lived deliciously, and their merchandise was gold and silver, and marble, and incense, and ointment, and horses, and chariots, and the *bodies and souls of men* (Rev. xviii. 7–16).

As to the mass of the clergy, secular and regular alike, parish priests, and monks and friars, their con-

dition was shameless.* One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said in a later day, "They pretend to resemble the apostles, and they are filthy, ignorant, impudent vagabonds. They are sots, wasps, whore-masters, vultures, born fools. Instead of going about doing good, and winning men for God, they haunted taverns, asked men to drink, led disgraceful brawls, and were notorious for their profanity." "They wasted their time and wealth in gambling and revelry; went about the streets roaring and outrageous, and sometimes had neither tongue, nor eye, not hand, nor foot, to help themselves for drunkenness" (Froude's "Erasmus," 12–15; 59–68; Le Bas, p. 162, quoted by Butler).

Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay; they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush. So far from blushing at their conduct, they gloried in it, and lorded it over the people by their power of the keys, and the terror

* The reader is, however, reminded that in spite of this there were no doubt scattered here and there throughout the Church men of simple and beautiful piety. Chaucer's charming picture of a poor town parson of that age is unsurpassed almost in English literature :—

"A good man was ther of religioun
And was a poore persoun of a town;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Christes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens *devoutly* wolde he teche.
This noble ensample to his sheep he gaf,
That first he *wroghte*, and afterward he taughte,
Christes lore, and His apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it himselve."

(Skeat's "Chaucer," iv. 15.) It is possible, however, that this character was suggested to Chaucer by one of Wycliffe's simple priests rather than by one of the ordinary clergy.

of their censures and excommunications. "The clergy seemed to exult in showing contempt of God and man by the licentiousness of their lives and the insolence of their dominion. They ruled with self-made laws over soul and body. As successors of the apostles they held the keys of hell and heaven; their excommunications were registered by the Almighty; their absolutions could open the gates of Paradise."

No wonder then that a man like Wycliffe, whose canon was God's Word, turned with his might against such men, and against such ways. He was not the first, by any means, nor the only one to turn the search-light on their lives. Fitzralph, the Chancellor of Oxford, had done similar work some years before, and John de Polliac also. But what Fitzralph, the Irishman, began, the Englishman carried on to perfection. His increasing study of God's Word opened more and more the eyes of his understanding. Controversy sharpened his weapons, and multiplied his arguments. His visit to Bruges brought out in more lurid light the corruptions of the whole Romish system. And Wycliffe, like John Knox, was one who never feared the face of man.

With a splendid audacity, he turned on the friars, those sanctimonious rascals of the four orders, and exposed their corruptions with unsparing thrusts. His indictment was as scathing as that of Erasmus, some generations later, and to the end he waged this warfare, undaunted by sickness, bulls, or insults. "I shall not die but live, and declare again the evil deeds of the friars," is one of his sayings which has passed into fame (1379).

But the friars were not the only ones, or even

the first, that he attacked. The lives of prelates and priests were as bad, if not worse, and clerical worldliness, and pomp and pride aroused his indignation to the extreme. The more he searched the Word of God, the more he saw their inconsistency with the teaching of Christ and His apostles. Christ and His apostles were poor men. These were great and rich. They were unworldly and heavenly-minded. These were earthly and worldly-minded. They cared nothing for worldly things. These cared for nothing else. He and they worked; these lived at ease. They sought peace and quietness. These fought and stirred up strife. They lived among the people and sought their good. These left the people and sought their goods. Christ and His apostles owned no property, and desired none. These added lands to lands, and house to house, lived in wealth and grandeur, drawing all they could from the living of the people.

Is it then a strange matter that in such an age and with such men, Wycliffe should not only have denounced such things with all his might, but should have uttered sayings which give colour to the charge of his detractors that he was a communist, a socialist, and a promoter of anarchy.

The scorn of Wycliffe knew no bounds. His indignation was unmeasured. He denounced their wealth. He laughed to scorn their pomp and show. He questioned their right to riches and estates. He held that it became no minister of Jesus Christ to live in possession of such property, and most strenuously denounced their vast endowments and princely wealth.

Of course, he was misunderstood then. Of course,

he is misunderstood now. His enemies calumniated him then. Their descendants calumniate him to-day. To be great, says Emerson, is to be misunderstood. They called him a communist. They called him the friend of anarchists and spoilers. They called him the father of insurrection and disorder. They blamed him for all the riots and revolts of the times. And to-day even there are Church writers who seek to belittle his greatness as a reformer by depicting him as a revolutionist (*see* "Hist. Ch. of Eng.," Hore, pp. 192–195). But there can be no doubt that many of the views fathered upon him, and the theories with which he was charged, are the outcome of the hatred and misrepresentation of his Romish opponents, and of those who dislike his evangelical doctrine. For, after all, there is no clear evidence that Wycliffe ever patronised socialists, or advocated socialism. He may have held, and probably did hold, a pretty strong theory of Church disendowment. Thousands of clergy have done the same who could in no wise be called socialists. But that he even advocated or patronised the wild communism of a John Bull, or a Wat Tyler, is an assertion that proceeds only from ignorance (Green's "Hist. English People," i. 488). To denounce the greed and pomp of ecclesiastics was one thing; to advocate the spoliation of property, another thing altogether. Nor is there any clear evidence that the views of Wycliffe with regard to Church property and clerical possessions were at variance with the plain teaching of Scripture and the words of Christ. There is really nothing, after all, in Wycliffe's ideas about money, and the right of the clergy to wealth and property, that is beyond a fair and honest interpretation of the

teaching of the New Testament on the subject. He seems only to have taught what Christ Jesus taught, Matt. vi. 19, 20; x. 9; Luke xii. 33, 34, and to have advocated what His apostles advocated, Acts xx. 33; 2 Cor. xii. 14; 1 Peter v. 2. When we consider these passages, and remember in addition the startling wickedness of the clergy and the corruptions of the age, we need not be surprised to find that a man like Wycliffe should have taken the stand he did, or have spoken the strong words he is said to have spoken. He was not immaculate. He had John the Baptist work to do, and he did it. It was no time for rose-water and soft platitudes. He had to speak sternly and strongly, and as he was human, he may even at times have spoken violently. Flagrant diseases require flagrant treatment. But that he never acted the part of a communistic incendiary, or advocated the spoliation of ecclesiastical possessions, is the testimony of nearly every reliable English historian.

XLVI. *At what date may Wycliffe be said to have come forth in his last and greatest character as a reformer, not merely of abuses, but of the cardinal beliefs of the Catholic Church?*

It is not easy to fix the exact date. For a long time he had been steadily growing in the clearness of his spiritual insight, and in the fervour of his anti-Romish zeal. Roughly speaking, however, the years 1377 or 1378, may be taken as important epochs in Wycliffe's reforming career. In the former year he was charged with heresy, and formally summoned by the Archbishop of Canterbury as the representative of the Roman See to answer to the charges laid against him. The year before, his enemies had sent nineteen articles and extracts from his writings to the

Pope. The Pope replied with five bulls, in which he declared that Wycliffe was a pestilential heretic, whose damnable doctrines were to be plucked up by the roots, lest they should defile the faith and bring into contempt the Church of Rome; and called upon the archbishop, the king, and the university, to deal summarily with the heretic (Fox, v. 227). All of which things prove in a very practical manner the position then occupied by the English Church, as an integral part of the Church of Rome.

The damnable doctrines complained of were only questions, however, that touched the wealth and power of the Church, the binding and loosing power of the Pope, the right of the temporal lords to deprive wicked clerics of their temporalities, and other matters. The trial, as every one knows, came to nothing. Popular opinion was on Wycliffe's side, and the proceedings were stopped by a representative of the Regent.

The effect of this action upon Wycliffe was important. It strengthened his courage. It deepened his conviction. It fortified him in his defence of what he was seeing more and more clearly to be true. It emboldened him in defiance of what he saw more clearly to be false. In the following year (1378), another event happened. That was the Papal schism, the crowning scandal of Papal Christianity. There they were, the two infallible heads of the Catholic Church, fighting each other like wolves; one at Rome, in Italy, the other at Avignon, in France. Each claimed to be infallible, each right, each the vicegerent of Christ, and each the representative of the unity of the Godhead in heaven, and the Church on earth. Urban VI., the Pope of Rome, excommunicated

his rival, the impostor at Avignon. Clement VII., the Pope at Avignon, excommunicated his rival, the impostor at Rome. Each promulgated decrees, scattered bulls, issued anathemas, and played the rôle of the visible head of Christ's Church.

The effect of this upon Wycliffe was material. For a long time, doubtless, the seeds of suspicion with regard to the whole Romish system had been ripening within his mind. The Christianity of Christ was so utterly irreconcilable with the Christianity of the Pope. The teachings of the apostles were so absolutely contrary to those of the Papists. His work as a patriot and constitutional reformer had opened his eyes to the falsity of the Papal claims. His impeachment of the morals of the clergy had convinced him of the corruption of the Papal communion. But now he seems to have reached a final conclusion. The whole fabric of the Papal system is anti-Christian. The Pope is Antichrist. The Popish system a mass of error. The Papal decrees, the laws and judgments of the enemy of Christ.

He writes a tract entitled "Schisma Papæ," the schism of the Pope, in which he not only describes the Papal system as Antichrist, but actually urges the sovereigns of Europe to seize this opportunity for destroying a structure already shaken to its foundations. It is absurd to speak of infallibility in connection with such a system. "God hath cloven the heart of Antichrist, and made the two parts fight against each other." The position he had before asserted, that the Church of Rome is not the head of the Churches, and the Pope of Rome invested with no greater jurisdiction, is now established by the facts. The whole system of Rome is contrary to the Gospel

of Christ. Its authority and rule were not the canons of Scripture. Its doctrines were not the doctrines of the New Testament. Its practices were not the practices of the apostles. And, chief of all its errors, the fountain and heart of all, was the Roman doctrine of the eucharist. This, as Archbishop Cranmer wrote nearly two centuries after, is the chief root of all Roman error. The rest is but branches and leaves. The very body of the tree is the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation.

Turning, then, from his pursuit of friars and monks, and his sarcastic impeachment of the follies of the day, Wycliffe addresses himself to the more serious task of destroying the doctrinal corruptions of the Church, and restoring the foundations of primitive truth; not of denouncing and destroying error merely, but of setting forth in its simplicity the doctrine of Christ and His apostles.

In this course his greatest task was unquestionably the exposure of transubstantiation. This dogma was the key of Rome's position, and around it gathered, as towers around a citadel, the various dogmas of Popery.

XLVII. *On what grounds did Wycliffe attack the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation?*

On two grounds.

First, on the ground of Scriptural inconsistency; next, on the ground of philosophical impossibility.

A man who studied the Gospels and read the Epistles of the New Testament, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, could not long hold the Roman teaching with regard to the eucharist. The two were irreconcilable. The monstrous position that the priest renews at each sacrament the propitiatory

sacrifice of Calvary, and stands daily offering that offering which the Scripture expressly asserts was *once* for all offered, "one sacrifice for ever," was as repugnant to his enlightened spirit as the equally monstrous position, that at the word of a simple and ignorant man, the Lord of Heaven descends from His throne and suffers Himself to be immolated upon the altar, expelling the substance of the bread and wine, incorporating in place thereof His glorious body.* Christ ascended into heaven. There He sits at the right hand of God. The whole tenor of the New Testament is opposed to the figment of His corporal presence on the altar. The natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven. He is not here. He is risen. "The natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here," as our Prayer-Book teaches now.

But Wycliffe's objection to the doctrine of transubstantiation was also philosophical. It was based on reason. Remember that Wycliffe was one of the profoundest thinkers of the day. He was a logician of no mean order. His life as a schoolman had been passed in discussing theological questions in an argumentative manner. And reason, as well as Scripture, became his strength.

Wycliffe's position was this.

It is contrary to reason to assert that the accidents of the bread can remain in the eucharist after consecration, and yet the substance of the bread not be there.

* "And thou then that art an earthly man by what reason mayest thou saye that thou makest thy Maker?" ("Wycket," vi.).

"For nothing is more repulsive than that any priest in celebrating daily makes or consecrates the body of Christ. For our God is not a recent God" ("De Eucharistia," c. i. p. 16).

That is, it is utterly unphilosophical and unreasonable to say that the piece of bread can look the same, and feel the same, and weigh the same, and taste the same, and smell the same, and yet not be bread at all, but something else than bread.* The thing is impossible. If the accidents of a thing are there, then the substance of the thing is there also. If they *seem* to be bread and wine, they *are* bread and wine. Now it is undeniable, that after consecration the consecrated bread is to all appearance bread, just the same as before. The accidents of material bread remain. This is fact. But it is equally true that the accidents of a thing cannot remain without its substance. That is philosophy. The corporal presence of Christ, or transubstantiation, is, therefore, impossible. God requires us to believe many things which are above reason. To believe a mystery is one thing, to accept a thing that contradicts common sense is another.

But then came at once the objection. What in that case of the words of Christ, "This is My body"? Did He mean this is My body, or did He mean something else? If He meant this is My body, then the subject after consecration must be, *not* bread, but Christ's body.

Wycliffe's argument in answer to this was simple.

The words, "This is My Body," were intended by Christ in a formal, figurative, and sacramental sense. The bread after consecration is still bread. Substantially or really as regards its subject, it is what its

* "Ideo vel oportet veritatem Scripturae suspendere, vel cum sensu ac judicio humano concedere quod est panis" ("Trialogus," iv. 4, 257).

"Inter omnes sensus extrinsecos, quos Deus dat homini, tactus et gustus sunt in suis judiciis magis certi; sed illos sensus haeresis ista confunderet sine causa" (*ibid.*, p. 259).

accidents declare it to be, bread, real bread. But sacramentally it is the Body of Christ. "The bread by the words of consecration is not made the Lord's glorified body, or His spiritual body, which is risen from the dead, or His fleshly body as it was before He suffered death; but that the bread still continues bread." This Wycliffe contended, in the teeth of an angry Church, was not only the true doctrine of Scripture, but the ancient doctrine of the Catholic Church.* It was the doctrine of the primitive Church, St. Augustine, and the great Fathers of the faith. "The consecrated host we see upon the altar is neither Christ nor any part of Him, but an effectual sign of Him." "It is not to be understood that the body of Christ comes down from heaven to the host consecrated in every church. No. It remains ever fast and sure in heaven." †

XLVIII. *It is believed by some that Wycliffe retracted these views, and reverted to the doctrine of transubstantiation. Is there any ground for this statement?*

No.

On the contrary, when the University of Oxford proceeded to condemn him and his opinions, Wycliffe stood firm.

* "In all holy Scripture, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Apocalypse there be no wordes written of the makyng of Christe's body" ("Wycket," p. 11).

"Olim fuit fides ecclesiae Romanae in professione Berengarii quod panis et vinum quae remanent post benedictionem sunt hostia consecrata" ("Sacrament of Altar," 1381).

† "Hostia consecrata quem videmus in altari nec est Christus nec aliqua sui pars, sed efficax ejus signum" ("Thesis in Sacrament of Altar").

"Non est intelligendum corpus Christi descendere ad hostiam in quacunque ecclesia consecratum sed manet sursum in coelis stabile et immotum" ("Trialogus," iv. c. 8, p. 272).

His friends were timid. John of Gaunt, his former patron, refused any longer to champion him. It mattered not. The courage of Wycliffe was invincible. He had ceased to put his trust in princes. His help was in the Lord. In the latter part of the year 1382 he stood before the convocation of Oxford, before Archbishop Courtney, bishops, and the doctors, and his answer to their excommunications and suspensions was his bold confession in which he declared that there *is a* real presence in the sacrament, but *not* a corporal presence. That is, that the body of Christ is present, but not substantially or corporeally. Substantially the bread is bread; sacramentally it is the body of Christ. It is true that in some of his arguments he employed subtle phrases and certain obscure and equivocal expressions. But this was to be expected. Wycliffe was a schoolman, and delighted in the subtleties of the schools. The main thing is, that he still stood to his point, that the bread is still bread and the wine still wine after consecration. And the best proof of his not having recanted is the fact of the unrelenting persecution of his enemies.*

For Wycliffe never flinched. He had put his hand to the plough, and he did not turn back. "Finaliter veritas vincit" was his proud avowal. I believe that in the end the truth will conquer. Nor did he lack adherents and supporters. When the whole current of Church thought swept fiercely against him, and prelates and doctors denounced him as an apostate,

* It has been questioned whether Wycliffe ever made this recantation before the clergy at Oxford. What was purported to be such is said to be a statement of Wycliffe's put forth afterwards. It matters little. The point is that he did not recant, but on the contrary defended his opinions.

a growing band of faithful ones clung closely to him. They believed his teachings. They became apostles of his doctrines. They went from parish to parish, and town to town; and soon in every hamlet, village, town, and castle, the Wycliffites abounded. They grew in spite of hatred, and death, and recantations, and persecutions. They were found in the schools. They waxed bold in the University. They appeared amongst even the nobles. Wycliffe maintained to the end his vigorous denunciations of the errors of Rome. In the wonderful providence of God he was unmolested by persecution and devoted his few remaining years with tireless assiduity to the great cause of truth.

He did not confine himself to the doctrine of transubstantiation by any means. He assailed every superstitious practice and doctrine of the Church. And while with relentless logic he shook to the base the fabric of error, he set forth also the great positive principles of evangelical truth.

XLIX. *What were the two great instruments employed by Wycliffe during his latter years for this purpose?*

The two great instruments of Wycliffe in the work of reform were his tracts and his Bible. The influence of the first was very great. They were simply appeals to the people, and were not addressed to the learned and logical, the scholars and schoolmen of the day, but to all classes of churchmen. He had addressed the University, and the University at the dictate of a Roman legate had hardened its heart. The doctors had ears to hear, but they would not hear. As the Apostles of old said to the envious Jews, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing you put it

from you, lo we turn to the peoples," so Wycliffe turned to the people of the land. He addressed them in their own mother tongue.

With an amazing industry, Green tells us, he issued tract after tract in the tongue of the people. "The dry, syllogistic Latin is suddenly flung aside, and in rough, clear, homely English, he woos the hearts of the masses." And with wonderful effect. The influence of the tracts was extraordinary. They were circulated widely. They were read voraciously. They were earnestly believed. They created thinkers. They enlisted the devotion of awakened lives.

It was the first Tractarian movement in the English Church. The tracts were partially negative, partially positive. They exposed and destroyed the erroneous; they explained and restored the true. Nearly every distinctive tenet and dogma of Romanism, or as it was then, and is now so falsely called the "Catholic" faith, was denounced and proved false. The great canon of the true religion of Christ, the Word of God and the teaching of the Apostles was unflinchingly upheld. What saith the Scripture? What did Christ and His apostles teach? These seem to have been the only authority and rule of Wycliffe's positions. He had arrived at the conclusion which was the reason of the Reformation. The conclusion that all Christian doctrine is to be tested by God's Holy Word.

The result was a revelation. The things that were most widely and firmly believed by English Churchmen were without a shadow of foundation in Scripture. The great and massive structures of the Roman temple were built on quagmires of superstition and fable. Pardons, indulgences, pilgrimages, auricular confession, image worship, saint worship,

the adoration of the host, the absolution of the priest, the infallibility of the Pope; these things were the very substance of Church religion.

And they were all wrong; they were false.

This was a tremendous conclusion for a man in that age to arrive at. But God was his judge, and the Word of God his authority.

They were not in the Scriptures. They were without authority there. Therefore they could not be true. About the host he says in one of the tracts: "They have made us believe a false law; the falsest belief is taught in it. For where do you find that ever Christ, or any one of His disciples or apostles, taught any man to *worship* it?" ("Wycket," p. vi.). He found no adoration of the host in the Word of God. It had no right, therefore, to be practised in the Church. Or, as the Church of England teaches to-day, "no adoration is intended, or ought to be done, for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians."

About the asserted power of the priest to transform the piece of bread by the words of consecration into the Saviour's real body, he says again: "You cannot create the world *by using the words of creation.* How shall you make the Creator of the world by using the words by which ye say He made the bread His body?" (*Ibid.*). With regard to the doctrine of pardons and indulgences, and the supererogatory merits of the saints. There is no warrant for these things in the Word. They are false, and should not be taught in the Church. "Do they imagine," says he, "that God's grace may be bought and sold like an ox or an ass. The merit of Christ is of itself sufficient to redeem every man from hell." He reprobates the idea of

worshipping of images, and cuts in twain the casuistry of the Romish defence. "We worship not the image but the being represented by the image, say the patrons of idolatry in our times. It is sufficient to say the idolatrous heathen did the same." He opposes the celibacy of the clergy. He denies the necessity of prayer to the saints, or saint worship. He rejects the doctrine of purgatory (though some have questioned this), and the value of the Latin tongue in the services of the Church. He impugns the practice of private masses, and of extreme unction. He denounces the artificiality of the chanting of the priests, and the use of oil and salt in the consecration. In short, in his tracts and treatises, Wycliffe either denied or questioned every prominent feature of the Romish system of religion (Kurtz, p. 501; Milner, 598–605; Short, 115–119; Green, i. 490; Martineau, 452–463; Massingbred, pp. 138–141).

In fact, he went almost beyond this.

He took the position, as Fisher says in his history of the Reformation, not only of a Protestant, but, in many important particulars, of a Puritan. He certainly did make statements that were capable of misconstruction, and in rejecting totally ecclesiastical tradition as a guide, assumed positions that laid him open to the charge of iconoclasm. If the statements with which he is credited are true, he would not only have abolished Popery, but episcopacy; and destroyed, not merely the doctrine of transubstantiation, but all ceremonial worship.

If the statements are true!

That is just the point. For we must remember, in the first place, that the accounts we have of Wycliffe's teaching are largely gathered from Romish

sources; in the second place, that his protests were largely against the abuses and misuses of things, and are not to be considered as denials of their use, as his ideas, for instance, with regard to the rite of confirmation; and, in the third place, as Fuller so wisely said, many of his phrases, which are heretical in sound, would appear orthodox in sense.

However, the influence of the tracts, as we said, was enormous. They found their way into many hearts, and wherever they went they arrested and awakened. If the evidence of contemporary historians is to be relied on, every second man on the highway was a Wycliffite, that is, a man who, by the teachings and writings of Wycliffe, had come to doubt and deny the Romish system, and to think for himself on religious subjects.

Of the second great instrument in Wycliffe's reforming career, a few words only need be said.

The Bible of John Wycliffe was his greatest achievement. The work of translating the Bible into English had, doubtless, been attempted before Wycliffe's day, and two English versions of the Psalms were made in the reign of Edward the Third. But Wycliffe's honour was not merely his assertion of the theoretical right of Christians to read the Word of God for themselves, but his giving the Bible to the people in their own tongue. The version of St. John's gospel by Bede was in Saxon. The scholastic version of the Bible was in Latin. The portions of Elfric, and Rolle, and William of Shoreham were, to all practical purposes, theological curiosities. Nobody knew anything about them. The Church, so far from encouraging the reading

of the Bible, encouraged its obscurity. The Church of England, or rather, the Church of Rome in England, for that is what it practically was, so far from ordering it to be read in the churches, was soon about to order to prison everybody who read it at all. No jailor ever kept a prisoner more secure in an inner prison than the Church of Rome kept the Word of God. A few persons here and there could read it in Latin; but the majority cared nothing about it. The most learned and intelligent of the clerks, on their own confession, knew less of the Bible than many of the Wycliffites. The Bible was a sealed book.

Wycliffe, as the first and greatest reformer, boldly claimed the Bible for the people. The Bible, he said in effect, is the faith of the Church. If it is heresy to read the Bible, then the Holy Ghost Himself is condemned, who gave it in tongues to the apostles of Christ to speak the Word of God in all languages under heaven. If the faith of the Church is in the Bible, then the Bible should be in the hands of the people. If God's Word is the life of the world, and every Word of God is the life of the human soul, no Antichrist can take it away from those that are Christian men, and thus suffer the people to die for hunger.

It was, doubtless, such views as those which spurred Wycliffe on in his great work. Not only that they might for themselves test his doctrines by the Word of God, but that they might test all doctrines by it. In spite of opposition, hindrance, and incredible difficulties, he persevered in the work, and, before his death, by the assistance of divers helpers, he had the satisfaction of translating the Bible as a whole.

It was first published in 1382, and though printing was, of course, uninvented, the devotedness of his transcribers produced copies in abundance. This year 1382 is a great date in English history.* It is a year to be had greatly in honour of Englishmen. The Bible is now in the hands of the people, and the truth is abroad. The foundation stone of the Reformation in England is laid. The Reformation has begun.

Wycliffe lived but a short time after this. He did not again appear before the public eye. But, though he lived in retirement, he accomplished a vast amount of work. He laboured with untiring enthusiasm, as far as his failing health permitted, in his parish at Lutterworth, preaching sermons, writing tracts, and scattering his writings abroad over the land.† Little is known of his life during these latter days; the only incident of importance that is generally related being the Brief of Pope Urban in demanding his appearance at Rome, and Wycliffe's alleged reply, so full of gentle sarcasm and innocent instruction.‡ He told the Pope he would be delighted to explain his teachings to any one, but especially to him, because as the first follower of Christ in Christendom, he would, of course, be the humblest, and exempt from worldly

* There is still a degree of uncertainty amongst scholars with regard to the exact date of Wycliffe's Bible. But 1382 is the most probable.

† An idea of Wycliffe's enormous working power may be gathered from the fact that his published works in Latin and English are estimated at about 161.

‡ Lechler regards this question of the citation to Rome as mere tradition. But there seems to be evidence for it in Wycliffe's treatise "De Citationibus," though the evidence for the letter to the Pope is very uncertain. The letter does not seem to have been personally addressed, or delivered.

honours ; and as he of all men was most bound by the law of Christ, he would naturally leave all temporal dominion and rule to the secular power. He regretted that he was unable to appear before the Pope in person, but would, both by himself and with others, remember him in his prayers. The letter is given in full by Fox ("Book of Martyrs," v.). It is really a delicious bit of reading.

Wycliffe died on the last day of 1384, leaving behind him a noble heritage of truth, and a record of untarnished devotion to the cause of Christ.

Wycliffe was beyond controversy the first and greatest of reformers. We do not say that he was the clearest or the soundest. In some respects his knowledge was defective, and his teaching obscure. He was a man ; it would have been contrary to the laws of human development if he had been as enlightened as an angel. He lived in the darkest of the Dark Ages. Protestantism as a doctrinal system was unknown. The doctrines of the simple Gospel unheard of. Popery was not only believed, it was exclusively believed. There was nothing else to believe. It was a long time too before even Wycliffe's eyes were opened to the real meaning of Romanism, and the true character of Popery as a doctrinal system. It is not to be expected, therefore, as Milner seems to expect, that Wycliffe's writings should be characterised by the clearness and soundness of such men as Ridley and Melancthon and Luther. The marvel is that he was as sound as he was, and as clear as he was. For in some of his views he seems to have been even more

enlightened than the German reformers. No, he was neither the clearest nor the soundest of the reformers, but he was the first and greatest.

He was not only the greatest reformer of the Church of England, he was the first reformer of Europe. His reputation was continental. He anticipated the Reformation of the sixteenth century in England and abroad. If Luther was the Joshua of the Reformation movement, Wycliffe was its Moses. Here again was that saying verified, "one soweth and another reapeth." Wycliffe sowed, Luther reaped. Wycliffe spake, Cranmer and Ridley re-echoed the words. As far as his influence in England is concerned, a modern Oxford professor describes it as wholly unapproached in the entire history of the nation for its effect on English theology and English religious life. But his influence was not confined to England. The works of Wycliffe scattered throughout the Continent became the seeds of reformations. They influenced the universities. They gave birth to reformers. He, being dead, yet spake. In vain did Romish bishops burn his books. In vain did a great council of Rome condemn his doctrines. In vain did an Anglican bishop exhume his bones, and cast his ashes on the flowing stream. "The brook conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean." The very ashes of Wycliffe became an emblem of his doctrine, dispersed over the world.

CHAPTER X.

THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE AGE OF WYCLIFFE.

Wycliffe's teaching largely identical with the present doctrine of the Church of England—On the supremacy of the Holy Scriptures—On the Apocrypha—On justification by faith and grace—On the Church—On pardons, image worship, saint worship—On the Lord's Supper—Wycliffe did not teach consubstantiation—On Sacramental adoration—Wycliffe's teaching private opinion only—What was then condemned by the Church as heresy now the teaching of the Church of England as a Church—The Church that condemned Wycliffe, the Church of Rome.

WE purpose in this chapter to open up a question or two that will materially aid the reader in his endeavour to understand the exact doctrinal position of the Church of England in Wycliffe's age as contrasted with the Church of England since the Reformation, and will also throw light upon the difficult subject of the relationship between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. With this end in view we will first of all compare the teachings of Wycliffe with those Reformation principles so distinctly set forth in the present formularies of the Church of England, and then go on to show that the treatment of Wycliffe by the English Church is one of the strongest possible demonstrations of its Romanised and Roman character. He was a Protestant. The Church to which he belonged was not. We will then proceed to take up the very

involved question of the identity of the English Church as a persecutor of Wycliffe with the Church of Rome, a subject that is of the very first importance, and requires the closest possible attention on the part of the student of English Church history, reserving the question of the nationality of the English Church for the following chapter.

At a surface glance the first question we are about to discuss seems almost superfluous. Fifty years ago, indeed, it would have been. The question would have been unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative, and few, if any, would have dreamed of disputing it. But in these days when even leaders of Church thought endeavour to explain away history, and unheard of interpretations are given to century old facts, when falsehood is varnished and truth disguised, and Wycliffe's foes are those of his own household, the case is different. And as the question is of the greatest interest, and the understanding of it indispensable to our understanding of the reformation of the Church of England, we will enter into it somewhat particularly and discuss it at length. The question is this:—

L. *Did Wycliffe anticipate the Reformation movement in the Church of England; and were the principles and doctrines for which he contended the principles and doctrines of the Church of England of to-day?*

It is, of course, a very large question.

As far as some of the details of Wycliffe's teachings are concerned, especially with regard to his sociological and sacramental views, it is certain that the question must be answered in the negative. But with regard to the main principles assumed by Wycliffe in his doctrines and teaching, it is certain

that they were substantially in agreement with those Reformation principles which are now the distinctive feature of the Church of England. The Prayer-Book says that the true doctrine of the Church of England is contained in the Articles; "That the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England," authorised, allowed and generally subscribed to, "do contain the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's Word." If this is the case, it is certain that the cardinal doctrinal positions established by Wycliffe, are the cardinal and distinctive principles of the Church of England.

First, and foremost of all, Wycliffe maintained as the very corner-stone of his doctrinal system the supremacy of the authority of the Holy Scriptures.* With him the ever infallible test of all doctrines was the Word of God. He reasserted the great canon of Athanasius and Theodoret, the holy and divinely inspired Scriptures are themselves sufficient for the enunciation of the truth. To this touch-stone all human writings, human opinions, and human traditions, were to be unhesitatingly brought. The authority of Scripture infinitely surpasses the authority of any writings whatsoever. To hold the contrary is the most dangerous of heresies. Not only so. He took what was then the audacious and extraordinary position that *the teachings of popes and prelates were not to be accepted as* ex cathedra *statements of*

* "Sola Scriptura sacra est illius auctoritatis et reverentiae, quod si quidquam asserit debet credi" ("De Civili Dominio").

"Omnis lex utilis sanctae matri ecclesiae docetur explicite vel implicite in Scriptura" ("De Ecclesia," c. 8).

"Impossibile est, ut dictum Christiani vel factum aliquod sit paris auctoritatis cum Scriptura sacra" ("De Veritate Scripturae sacrae," c. 15).

Church belief, simply because they were the statements of popes and prelates to which, because of their authority, all men should stand. Men, that is Christian men, Churchmen, the lay people, were to be established in God's law. They were to examine for themselves the faith, and to know the subject of belief (Massingbred, "English Reformation," p. 127).

In other words, he promulgated as his private opinion what is now the authorised faith of the Church of England in the first of its distinctive Articles. The sixth Article of the Church of England is in brief a succinct summation of Wycliffe's teaching on the subject of the sufficiency of the holy Scriptures.

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, *is not to be required of any man*, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." This is exactly what Wycliffe contended for. The doctrinal supremacy of the Scriptures, and the reasonable right of private judgment. The Bible, and the Bible alone, was to be the standard of doctrine. The revelation which God gave in His Word was for all men, and it was the privilege of every man by means of the Spirit's illumination to understand its contents. The Scripture alone was sufficient for saving instruction (*see* Martineau, "Church Hist. in England," pp. 456, 457).

Wycliffe's teaching, too, with regard to the Apocrypha was similar to that of the Church of England to-day.

"It is absurd," he said, "to be warm in defence

of the apocryphal books, when we have so many which are undeniably authentic. Use the following rules for distinguishing the canonical books from such as are apocryphal. Find out, in the first place, what books of the Old Testament are cited in the New Testament, and authenticated by the Holy Ghost. And in the next place, consider whether the like doctrine is delivered by the Holy Ghost elsewhere in the Scriptures" (Milner, p. 600). In the sixth Article, the Church of England also puts the Apocrypha on a distinctly different footing from the canonical Scriptures, and refuses them as the basis of any doctrine.

In the next place, Wycliffe taught men "to trust *wholly* in Christ; to rely *altogether* on His sufferings; to beware of seeking *to be justified in any other way* than by His righteousness." "The performance of good works without Divine grace is worthless. Those who follow Christ become *righteous through the participation of His righteousness* and would be saved." "Human nature is wholly at enmity with God; *we cannot perform a good work* unless it be properly *His good work*." "We have no merit. His mercy *prevents* us so that *we receive grace;* and *it follows us* so as to help us and keep us in grace."

"The merit of Christ is of itself sufficient to redeem every man from hell. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for salvation." "If men believe in Christ, then the promise of life that God hath made shall be given by virtue of Christ to all men that make this the chief matter." (These quotations are chiefly from selections from Wycliffe's own manuscripts made by Dr. James, keeper of the public library at Oxford, and quoted by Milner, pp. 601, 602.)

This is surely very clear. There is no encour-

agement here to put trust in saints and Church services and sacramental offices for salvation. There is no hint of that quasi-Pelagianism, which ascribes salvation partly to man, and partly to God. The grace of God is pre-eminent. Christ is all; the all-sufficient and inclusive Saviour. Even if Wycliffe did not hold with Luther's clearness, as some besides Melancthon have hinted, the doctrine of justification by faith, it cannot be doubted that he grasped the reality of salvation by the merit of Christ alone. He got hold of the fact rather than the dogma of justification by faith.

And how similar his teaching was to what is now the distinctive teaching of the Anglican Church. As we read the tenth and eleventh and thirteenth articles, we seem to be reading quotations from Wycliffe's writings. Wycliffe might have written them himself.

"Men become righteous through the participation of Christ's righteousness," said Wycliffe.

"We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," is the distinctive teaching of the Church of England (Article xi.).

"Seek not to be justified in any other way than by His righteousness," said Wycliffe. "It is altogether a vain imagination that man can of his moral behaviour induce God to give him the grace of the Holy Spirit needful for conversion."

"We are accounted righteous before God, *only* for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our works or deservings," is the teaching of the Church (Article xi. of the Justification of Man).

"We cannot perform a good work unless His mercy prevents us and follows us," said Wycliffe.

"We have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will," is the teaching of the Church (Article x.).

"Unbelievers, though they might perform works *apparently* good in their matter, still were not to be accounted righteous men," said Wycliffe.

"Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasant to God . . . neither do they make men meet to receive grace," is the teaching of the Church of England (Article xiii.).

The five Articles, from Article x. to Article xiv., are almost *ipsissima verba* of Wycliffe's writings; a brief summary of the teachings of Wycliffe on the way of salvation.

Then, as to his teaching on the Church and the sacraments, there is scarcely an Article, from the nineteenth to the thirty-second of the Articles of the Church of England, which was not found substantially in the teaching of Wycliffe. His teaching, with regard to the nature of the Church, was directly opposed to the so-called Catholic Church teaching on the subject, and similar to the distinctive (that is, distinctive from the so-called Roman Catholic teaching) Church teaching of the Church of England in Article xix.*

There was to Wycliffe, although he may not have

* See the first six chapters of his "De Ecclesia." *E.g.*, "Ecclesia dicitur dupliciter, scilicet vere et pretense" (vera et pretensa in marg.), (Cap. iv. p. 71).

used the precise language of the Church to-day, a Church visible and a Church invisible, membership in the former by no means implying (as in the Roman system) membership in the latter. Even Bishops, if "of the world," were no members of the holy Church. The authority of the Word was superior to that of the Church and councils, as the Church of England distinctly (namely, in opposition to the position of the Church of Rome) teaches in Articles xx. and xxi. "The Church has fallen, because she has abandoned the gospels and preferred the laws of the Pope. Although there should be a hundred popes, we should refuse to accept their deliverances in things pertaining to the faith, unless they were founded in Holy Scripture." It is almost the very language of Article xxi.

He taught that the doctrine of the Church (the so-called Roman Catholic Church), as to pardons, and saint worship, and image worship, and relic worship, was superstitious, and unwarranted by Scripture. The Church of England teaches the same (Article xxii.).

He taught that the Latin should not be invariably used in the public worship of the Church. The people did not understand it, and it was contrary to the Word of God. The Church of England teaches the same (Article xxiv.).

With regard to the sacraments, especially the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, while the teaching of Wycliffe was defective in some particulars, it is remarkable how similar it is in the main to the distinctive teaching of the Church of England. He held most clearly that the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation was a figment. "The consecrated bread was not Christ; it was a sign, an

effectual sign of Christ." "Transubstantiation rests on no Scriptural grounds." "The bread still continues bread." "Substantially it is bread; sacramentally it is the body of Christ." "The body and blood of Christ are in the sacrament figuratively and spiritually." This was Wycliffe's language.*

The language of the Articles is almost verbally the same. "The sacraments are effectual signs of grace" (Article xxv.).

"Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but it is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions" (Article xxviii.). "The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner" (Article xxviii.).

Nor is it exactly accurate to say, as a Nonconformist writer, Mr. Beckett, does in his work on the English Reformation, that the doctrine Wycliffe taught was the doctrine of consubstantiation. He may have given colour to this in some of his assertions and paradoxes, but, on the other hand, it is certain that in the Trialogus, which may be regarded as a final

* Sacramentum eucharistiae est in figura corpus Christi et sanguis" ("Thesis, Sacrament of Altar," 1381).

"Idem est dicere: Hoc est corpus meum, et Hoc efficaciter et sacramentaliter figuret corpus meum" ("De Eucharistia," c. v. p. 116).

"Ponimus venerabile sacramentum altaris esse naturaliter panem et vinum, sed sacramentaliter corpus Christi et sanguinem" ("Confessio," quoted Lewis).

"When Christ says 'I am the true vine,' Christ is neither become a material vine, nor has a material vine been changed into the body of Christ; and even so also is the material bread not changed from its own substance into the flesh and blood of Christ" ("Wycket," p. 18).

digest of his theological system, and in the sermon called the Wicket he sets forth views that are more in accordance with the Reformed than with the Lutheran doctrine, and practically teaches that identification and impanation, as well as transubstantiation, are *not* to be established from Scripture. Impanation is simply consubstantiation, and in the opinion of so strong an authority as Dr. Lechler, Wycliffe's doctrine was that of an invisible and sacramental presence, that is, a spiritual presence.

Wycliffe condemned the system of sacramental adoration. "For where fynde ye that ever Christ, or any of His disciples or apostles taught any man to worshipe it?" ("Wycket," p. 6). So Article xxviii., "The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped." And Article xxv., "The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about."

He taught that the thing needful in the reception of the Lord's Supper is not merely a vain formalism and a superstitious rite, but a communion with Christ according to the spiritual life.* The very teaching of Article xxviii. and Article xxix. "The

* "Nec manducatio corporalis . . . quicquam prodest" ("Fasc. Zizan," Ed. Shirley, 124).

"Nota ulterius ad acceptationem corporis Christi quod non consistit in corporali acceptione, vel tactione hostiae consecratae, sed *in pastione animae* ex fructuosa fide" ("De Eucharistia," c. 1).

"Et concedimus quod non videmus in sacramento illo corpus Christi oculo corporali, sed oculo mentali, scilicet fide" ("De Eucharistia," c. 1).

"The non-elect do not partake of Christ's body and blood. The unbelieving receive only the visible signs" ("Misc. Serm.," 1).

"Only to worthy communicants is the Sacrament a blessing" ("De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae," c. 12)

mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith."

"The wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith," "eat not the body of Christ."

In short, if Wycliffe did not teach *in extenso*, he taught in germ nearly every distinctive doctrine now authoritatively set forth as the formulated teaching of the Church of England. In those great fundamental matters of faith, the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection, he held with the creeds of the Catholic Church. So, in like manner, does the Church of England in the first five Articles; and the first five Articles do not therefore contain anything peculiarly distinctive of the teaching of the Church of England.

But when he exalted Holy Scripture as the sole rule of faith, maintained exclusively its sufficiency, and struck out from that on the path of protest against the superstitious practices and unscriptural doctrines of the Catholic Church of the day, he embodied a system of teaching that was, as far as the Catholic teaching of the age was concerned, novel and distinctive. In like manner, the distinctive teaching of the Church of England, or what is commonly called distinctive Church teaching, properly speaking begins with the sixth Article. Here the Church of England parts company with the Roman (Catholic) Church, and from this to the end, with very few exceptions, the teaching of the Church of England is clear and well defined in its contrast to the teaching of the Church of Rome, and the teaching of the Russo-Greek or Oriental Church. On the one hand, the errors of the Church of Rome and of others are faithfully pointed out. On the other hand, Scriptural

truth and the teaching of Christ and His apostles are faithfully inculcated.

But the reader must bear in mind this fact:—

The teachings of Wycliffe were, after all, mere private opinions. They were the unauthorised views of an individual. Not only so. They were heretical, and declared to be "false and erroneous conclusions, and most wicked and damnable heresies." They were distinctly and flatly opposed to the teaching of the Church. They were abhorred by the Church. They were condemned by the Church. Wycliffe was a Protestant. The Church to which he belonged was not Protestant but Roman.

Now those same views, those same teachings, are *the doctrine* and *the teaching of the Church of England, as a Church.*

What the Church in England then called heresy, and burned men for believing, is now the authorised and distinctive teaching of the Church of England. The private opinions of a man have now become the teaching of the Church.*

* It is significant that writers of the so-called Catholic school try to undervalue and misrepresent the work and influence of Wycliffe. Jennings' representation especially, in his "Ecclesia Anglicana," is hardly becoming to a clergyman of the English Church. If he were a priest of the Church of Rome, he could not more subtly asperse Wycliffe's character and doctrinal position. Hore's treatment is little better. It only proves how Romish the Tractarian movement is, and how far removed from the old High Church position.

In strong contrast is the treatment of Southey in his Book of the Church, in which the author, a decided High Churchman of the old school, gives all honour to Wycliffe and his labours, and says of him: "A man whom the Roman Church has stigmatised as a heretic of the first class, but whom England and the Protestant world, while there is any virtue, and while there is any praise, will regard with veneration and gratitude."

LI. *Does not this throw light upon the identity of the Church of England in those days with the Church of Rome, and prove that the contention of some modern writers, that the pre-reformation Church of England is to be taken as a doctrinal and liturgical guide, is a fallacious one?*

Certainly it does, and it is a point that cannot be put aside.

The whole question of the exact doctrinal position of the Church in England, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is determined very clearly by the attitude of the Church towards Wycliffe and his followers. John Wycliffe was, in the true sense of the word, a Protestant. He was not a Protestant in the political sense only; he was a Protestant in the reformed or evangelical sense. He protested against the Pope, and he also protested against Popery. But the Church of which he was a member was not Protestant. The Church upheld everything against which he uttered his protest. The Church taught as *de fide* everything which he impugned.

The idea of a Church being Protestant was unheard of in those days. As far as Western Christendom was concerned, there was only one Church, the holy universal Church. That Church was then, as now, known as the holy Catholic Church of Rome, and the essence of Protestantism in those days was differing from its doctrines, and refusing to acknowledge the supremacy of its earthly head. From the way in which some Churchmen speak, one would imagine that there were a number of independent Churches, and that the Church of England, as one of these independent Churches, took up the question of Wycliffe's

teaching. Nothing of the kind. The Church that condemned Wycliffe, and from which Wycliffe differed, was Holy Mother Church—that is, the holy Church of Rome, which was then in England as the Church of Christ. There was no doctrine of the Church of England as distinct from the doctrine of the Church of Rome. As will be shown in a subsequent chapter, it was never asserted of any of the Lollards that they differed from the teachings of the Church of *England*, or taught contrary to the faith of the holy Church of *England*. Nor was it said in any of their recantations that they acknowledged their heretical opposition to the holy faith of the Church of *England*.

The accusation against the Lollards was that they "rose against the sound faith, and holy universal Church of Rome" (Bull, Boniface IX. against the Lollards, quoted "Fox," Book v. p. 252). Or, that they held "the opinion of the sacrament of the altar, of auricular confession contrary to that which the Church of Rome preaches and observes, and held heresies and errors which are of the Church of Rome condemned" ("Register of Archbishop Courtney," Fox, v. 254).

The revocation of William Swinderby, a Lincoln priest accused of Lollardry, began with this form: "I, William Swinderby, priest, although unworthy, of the Diocese of Lincoln, acknowledging one true and apostolic faith of *the holy Church of Rome*, do abjure all heresy and error opposed to the determination of the holy mother Church." And the sentence of condemnation against Oldcastle declared, "We took upon us to correct him, and sought all other ways possible to bring him again to the Church's unity, declaring unto him what the holy and universal

Church of Rome hath said and holden. And though we found him in the Catholic faith stiff-necked, &c." (Fox, v. 235).

These quotations are sufficient to show that the cause of the Church of England was the cause of the Church of Rome. That which was against the Church of England was against the Church of Rome. Wycliffe and his followers were Protestants against the teachings and practices of the *Church*, which was then almost invariably known as Holy Mother *Church*, the holy Catholic Church of Rome. They were Protestants against the Church, not the *Churches;* not against the Church of England as distinguished from the Church of Rome, or the Church of Rome as distinguished from the Church of England, but against the one holy Roman Catholic Church, of which all the bishops and priests in England were members, of which the holder of Peter's seat was head, whose laws and decretals and constitutions incorporated as the provincial statutes of archbishops in their provinces, the synodal acts of bishops in their dioceses, the regulations of masters in their colleges, and priests in their parishes, all Catholic Christians were bound to obey (Fox, v. 288).

Whatever views one may hold about the nationality of the Church of England during this period, no one can deny that all English Churchmen, both priests and laity alike, with the exception of the Wycliffites or Lollards, believed and maintained, with regard to transubstantiation, the seven sacraments, the manners, rites, ceremonies, and customs of the Church, concerning the worship of relics and indulgences, *as did the Church of Rome, and no otherwise.*

There is only one conclusion.

The teaching of Wycliffe, the treatment of Wycliffe, the teaching of the Lollards and the treatment of the Lollards, bring out in the clearest possible light, the doctrinal position of the Church in England two centuries, and a century and a half before the Reformation. They prove, in the distinctest manner possible, on the one hand, that there were in the Church in England in that day a body of men who held substantially the principles of the Reformation, and on the other, that the Church to which they belonged, statutorily termed the Church of England, not only did not hold these principles, but on the contrary, condemned them as false and dangerous, and proceeded against those who taught them as heretics against the Church.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY ROMAN IN SPITE OF ITS ALLEGED NATIONALITY.

The Statutes of Præmunire do not prove the nationality of the Church of England—They prove the nationality of the Crown—The Church protested against the Statute of Provisors—No such thing as the Church of England against the Church of Rome—Meaning of phrase nationality of the Church—The national Church not to be identified with the Estates of Parliament—Acts of *Parliament* against Rome cannot be taken as proofs of the nationality of the *Church*—Archbishops of Church of England were cardinals of Church of Rome—Argument of Bryce's Holy Roman Empire—The Church of England Roman as well as Romanised—The Church as Roman under Edward III. as under Richard III. —Ultramontane, Roman, Roman Catholic.

BEFORE we proceed to demonstrate the position of the Church in England by her treatment of the Lollards, we must turn aside in this chapter to take up a question that is inevitably suggested at this juncture, as it is one of no little moment. That is, the discussion of that seductive expression, the nationality of the English Church.

It is hardly possible for any one who has even a rudimentary acquaintance with the history of the pre-Reformation Church to ignore the emphasis that has been given to this aspect of the Church's position, especially by those writers who would identify as far as possible the pre-Reformation and post-Reformation aspects of the Church, and magnify its continuity at the expense of its reformation. But even from the standpoint of these writers the subject

is confessedly a difficult one, the line of demarcation between the Church of England and the Church of Rome being so faint at certain periods as to be imperceptible, even to the eyes of the most ardent Anglican Catholic. We will show, first of all, that the nationality of the Church of England in the fifteenth century, at any rate in the latter part of it, is a mere figment of Church theorisers. After that we shall prove, from the very statements of writers of the so-called Catholic party, that the body once known as the Church of England practically disappeared, being absorbed by the great body of the Church of Rome.

The conclusion of our last chapter was that the Church which condemned the English Wycliffe was the holy Church of Rome; and that the bishops and priests in England were stated to be members of the holy Roman Catholic Church, and bound in their laws, and decretals, and constitutions to the holder of Peter's seat. If this was the case, the reader may naturally inquire how this can be reconciled with assertions of English independence.

LII. *But what then of the Statute of Præmunire of* 1393, *to say nothing of the Statute of Provisors of* 1390?

Does not Canon Perry state, with regard to the former, that nothing done during all the history of the Middle Ages more distinctly proclaims and emphasises the nationality of the English Church?

He does.

And it might be inferred from his statements, and from the language of other writers, that the Church of England at this time was distinctly and Protestantly independent, and had come boldly out and assumed in its ecclesiastico-national character a strong

stand against the Church of Rome, or, at any rate, against Rome as the Papal system. But this is a great mistake.

The Statute of Præmunire had to do with the independence of the Crown, not with the independence of the Church. As we have remarked before, the essence of this Act was the stopping of the system of appeals to Rome. It prohibited all causes which touched the king and his kingdom, temporal as well as spiritual, from being carried out of the kingdom, or elsewhere. Of course it was aimed wholly at Rome, and mainly at the eagerness of the ecclesiastics to transfer law cases to their own courts. But it is a great mistake to think it was an uprising of the Church of the land in protest against the Pope and his evil ways, or a grand declaration that the Church of England was determined to take its stand against the encroachments of the Church of Rome.

Not at all. It was a Parliamentary statute altogether. It was the State protesting against the encroachments of the Court of Rome, not the Church upholding its national rights. It was the protection of the Anglican Courts, not the Anglican Church. It was a strong defensive measure, one of the strongest, Bishop Stubbs says, against Rome; but it was the defence of the Crown of England against Rome, not of the Church of England against the Papacy. The Pope had endangered the freedom of the British Crown, "which hath been so free at all times that it hath been in subjection to no earthly sovereign, but immediately subject to God, and no other, in all things touching the regalie of the said *Crown*." There is nothing said here about the rights of the Church, much less of *the Church* enacting the statute

as a self-defensive measure. The Church, *as a Church*, had nothing to do with it. It was not the Act of the Church at all. It was the Act of the State. So far from being the Act of the *Church*, the Church, in the person of its archbishops and bishops, protested against both this statute and its anti-Papal twin, the Provisors.

When the Statute of Provisors was passed in 1390, *the Church*, in the person of its representatives, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York, protested against it as an infringement of the rights of the Church, and an invasion of their duty to the Pope (Perry, i. 453). "The two archbishops entered a formal protest against it, as tending to the restriction of apostolic power and the subversion of ecclesiastical liberty."

The bishops of the Church also, as obedient sons of the Holy See, protested against the infringements of the Papal rights by this statute (Stubbs, ii. 506). And the Church, that is, as far as the Church had anything to do with it, did the same with the Præmunire. Twice it was passed; once in 1353, and again in 1393; and twice did the prelates protest. Nay more. The very protest of *the Church*, the words of the protest of Archbishop Courtenay against limiting the canonical authority of the Pope, are incorporated in the statute itself. And, up to the very age of the Reformation, *the Church*, in the person of the bishops and clergy, petitioned incessantly for its repeal (Stubbs, iii. 331), regarding it, to use the language of Pope Martin V., as that execrable statute put forth *against* the liberty of *the Church* in the kingdom of England. It is an utterly mistaken notion, therefore, that the Church in

England in the latter part of the fourteenth century, was instinct with the spirit of nationality, or Protestantism. The Pope had grievously interfered with the rights and privileges of the Crown and Courts. And the Crown knew this, and resented it. But to say, in connection with the Statute of Præmunire, that the Pope had grievously interfered with the rights and privileges of the English *Church*, is really to misstate the subject.

For the English Church at that time had no thought of any rights or privileges as an independent ecclesiastical corporation, nor is there any trace in the history of this period of such a thing as the Church of England, *as* the Church of England, asserting its rights and privileges against the Church of Rome.

The reader of such a work as Stubbs' "Constitutional History," for instance, will note that any protests against the encroachments and interferences of Rome were not made by the Church, but by the king, or the Parliament, or the nation. Nor were these ever regarded by the king, or the Parliament, or the nation, as encroachments against or interferences with the English Church as nationally distinct from the Church of Rome, much less as a body that was independent of the Papacy.

It is true that these writers make frequent references to the national Church and the nationality of the Church of England, at this period. (Stubbs' "Constitutional History," iii. 332; Perry, i. 454–483.)

But their meaning seems to be, that inasmuch as the temporalities of the Church, the lands and buildings and Church properties in general, pertained to the national establishment, known of old as the Church of England, and termed Ecclesia Anglicana in the

Great Charter and other statutes ; and, as the bishops, and clergy, and lay people of the land belonged to this ecclesiastical body, and while belonging to that ecclesiastical body, passed various statutes curtailing Papal encroachments, and defining the rights of the Crown and the State ; that, *therefore, these national enactments against Rome* proclaimed the distinctness of the national Church, as distinct from Rome. All of which would be accurate if the national Church were identified with the Parliament, and the Acts of the Crown were the Acts of the Church. But this was not the case. It is impossible to tell the exact date when the Church of England became submerged in the Church of Rome, and the national Church of England became, *to use Canon Perry's own language*, a portion of the Church of Rome located in England. It is impossible, because the transition was gradual, and so unperceived.

But to say that the Acts of Provisors and Præmunire were actuated by the desire of the Barons and Commons of England to defend their national Church, or assert the nationality of their Church *as distinct from the Church of Rome* (Perry, i. 483), or that the various legislative Acts regarding the tenure and taxation of ecclesiastical property, and the relative jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical Courts (Stubbs, iii. 332–341), proclaimed and emphasised the fact of the national Church, especially from the middle of the fourteenth to the end of the fifteenth century, is to proceed upon assumptions that are incapable of historical vindication. The assumption, in the first place, that all the statutes that Englishmen passed in defiance of Rome, to uphold the *Crown of England*, are to be taken as a proof that the Parliament intended

thereby to assert "the principle of the true nationality of the *Church* of England"; and, in the second place, that all the legislative enactments of this period that hinted at the existence of churches, bishops, ecclesiastics, and clerical ordinances, and canons, and laws, are to be taken as proof that the Church of England must, therefore, have been a distinct national Church. Both of these positions are historically undemonstrable.

The assumption that the Crown and the Church were thus closely identified is certainly untenable. If there was any identity in the matter, it was not identity between the Crown and the Church, but identity between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. There was but one Church, Holy Mother Church, and those statutes of Provisors and Præmunire were both of them regarded by the Church as put forth expressly *against the liberty of the Church.*

A statute, which "enunciated and kept alive the principle of the true nationality of the Church of England," could not be denounced by the heads of the Church of England as *against the liberty of the Church*, nor was it possible that a statute, which "emphasised the nationality of the Church of England," could be made the subject of a solemn protest to the Commons in Parliament by the archbishops and bishops of the Church.

The assumption that the Acts of Parliament, which related to ecclesiastical matters, indicated that the Church in England of the fifteenth century was nationally distinct from the Church of Rome is equally untenable.*

* This position is taken apparently in Stubbs' "Constitutional History."

Of course, as far as all property was concerned, as far as the constitutional tenure of revenues and endowments and the temporalities of the Church was concerned, the Church was by statutory appellation the Church of England. But really, as far as the very essence of its being was concerned, its doctrines, its unity, its life, its rulers, its clergy, and its head, the Church of England was really the Church of Rome, its members from the archbishops, and the bishops downwards through every ecclesiastical order, "holding the faith *and communion* of the Holy Church of Rome" (Fox, v. 329). In all the bulls and citations and letters patents of English bishops and archbishops and kings which are cited at such length in the fifth book of Fox's "Book of Martyrs" * there is found no reference or sentence with regard to the Church of England. The only Church mentioned in these documents, so accurately and faithfully transcribed by Fox, is the holy Church of Rome.†

And there is apparently no attempt to prove their identity. In some cases it is taken for granted, in other cases it seems to be unthought of. Our

* The only exceptions are in the article of the opinions of one John Badby, a Lollard, "of the year of our Lord, 1409, according to the computation of the Church of England," and the mention of the Church of Rome and England, generally together, in the articles set upon the Church doors against Henry the Fourth (Book, v. 264–266).

† The accuracy of Fox is attested by many Church writers. Bishop Stubbs, for instance, quotes him in his "Constitutional History" as an authority. Bishop Burnet said (Preface, i.-x.), "I must add, that having compared his acts and monuments with the records, I have never been able to discover any errors or prevarications in them, but the utmost fidelity and exactness." Even a secular historian like Froude says, "I trust Fox when he produces documentary evidence, because I have invariably found his documents accurate."

holy mother the Church, the holy universal Church of Rome, was the only Church in the mind of the English bishops and clergy. Whatever vague and subtle line of demarcation might exist nominally and theoretically between the Church of England and the Church of Rome as touching property and locality, there was certainly none with regard to doctrine and communion, and corporate life.

That many of the archbishops of the Church in England were cardinals of the Church of Rome ; that most of the bishops were appointed to their benefices by the Pope himself ; that even as far back as 1125–1126 the primate of England was a legate of the Pope, and governed the Church of England in the name and by the authority of the Pope, and that from the time of Archbishop Theobald (1151) the Archbishop of Canterbury was a Roman legate, are facts well known to even the superficial reader of English ecclesiastical history.

The visitor to the English minsters and cathedrals has only to read the inscriptions upon the monumental stones of some of the pre-Reformation bishops and archbishops to find striking confirmation of this.

Take, for instance, the monument in Canterbury Cathedral of Archbishop Chichely, who succeeded Archbishop Arundel in the year A.D. 1413.

"Here lies Henry Chichely, Doctor of Laws, formerly Chancellor of Salisbury, who, in the seventh year of King Henry IV. being sent on an embassy to Pope Gregory XII., was consecrated Bishop of St. David's *by the hands of that Pope* in the city of Sienna. The same Henry, also in the second year of King Henry V., was in this Holy Church elected archbishop and *translated to it by Pope John XIII.*

He died in the year of our Lord 1443, on the 12th day of April.

> "That for his sins your merits may atone,
> Oh! supplicate, ye saints, th' Almighty's throne."

Or read that of Archbishop Bourchier in the same choir aisle.

"Here lies the most reverend father in Christ and Lord, Thomas Bourchier, sometime *Cardinal of St. Cyna* in Thernius *in the Holy Church of Rome*, who died on the 30th day of March, in the year of our Lord, 1486. On whose soul the most High have mercy. Amen."

Or that of Archbishop Kemp.

"Here lies the most reverend father in Christ our Lord, John Kemp, *Cardinal Bishop of the Holy Roman Church* by the title of St. Rufina, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died on the 22nd day of May, A.D. 1453. On whose soul God have mercy. Amen."

They are only tombstone records to be sure. Yet they are significant, very significant to the reader of English Church history. They certainly show that the Church in England in these days was an integral part of the Church of Rome, that it had the same corporate life, and was a member of that great and undivided ecclesiastical organisation. As to independence in the modern sense, it was unthought of.

In the Middle Ages the only idea of the Church of Christ was its oneness as well as its visibility.* The theory of an *independent* national Church, owing

* The reader is referred to the historical argument of Professor Bryce in his able work upon the Holy Roman Empire, especially the eighteenth chapter.

no allegiance to the earthly head of the Church, the occupant of Peter's See ; a position, in fact, such as that now occupied by the Church of England, was not only unheard of, it was inconceivable. The Church was *one*, visibly *one*, nor is there any trace of such an idea as a *Church outside of and independent of* this oneness and visibility, and yet belonging in some mysterious unity to the body of the Catholic Church. The Holy Catholic Church (of Western Christendom of course) was the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and the position of the Pope as the rightful spiritual head of the visible Church was unquestioned.

Even Canon Perry, one of the ardent upholders of the nationality theory, admitted that towards the end of the fifteenth century the national Church of England might almost be said to cease to exist, and to become a portion of the Church of Rome located in England. That is, during the latter half of the fifteenth century the domination of the Roman Church was so absolute that there was no such thing in the ecclesiastical-spiritual sense as the Church of *England.* The only Church in the land was the Church of Rome (Perry, "Eng. Ch. Hist.," 1–495).*

LIII. *But when this writer said that under Cardinal Morton "the national Church of England might almost be said to cease to exist, and to become instead a portion of the Church of Rome located in England," did he mean that the Church at this time became more doctrinally Romanized than it was half a century, or a century before?*

* A careful reading of the latter part of Chapter xxiii. in Perry's Student's "English Church History" is necessary to an exact understanding of the argument that follows. From the historian's own standpoint it is a remarkable concession, as it cuts in two the continuity theory.

Not at all. It is hardly possible that he can mean this.

For the Church under Cardinal Morton in 1490 was exactly the same as under Archbishop Courtney in 1390. In doctrine and discipline, and its attitude to Rome, there was no difference at all. Nor was Morton in any way different from his predecessors for the past one hundred years. He, as they, was a Roman. He, as they, cared nothing for the statute of Præmunire and the statute of Provisors. He, as they, knew nothing about, and cared nothing about, the nationality of the Church of England. And as to Protestantism, in the modern Church of England sense, it would have been utterly abominable, if it had even been thought of in connection with the Church. But it was never thought of.

LIV. *What then is the meaning of the expression that at that time, and at that time for the first time, the Church of England ceased to exist, and became instead a portion of the Church of Rome? In what sense did it become more Roman?*

The only meaning seems to be that at this time the Crown was weak and less vigorous in its anti-Papal stand. Instead of there being a William the Conqueror or an Edward the Third upon the throne, there was a Henry the Sixth, a Richard the Third, and a Henry the Seventh; kings either too selfish or too busy to pass statutes like Præmunire, or to trouble about their enforcement.

The Church was the same. It was the Crown that was different.

The Church was as Romish and Papal as ever. England was as Roman Catholic as before. But the king, though Roman Catholic, was less anti-Papal. England's king had something else to do than fulmi-

nate against Rome, and threaten the bearers of Papal bulls, while the rival factions of the Roses were distracting the land with wars or rumours of wars.

That was the only difference.

But why the *Church* in England should be said to have only become a portion of the *Church of Rome located* in England, because the *Crown* of England waxed a little weaker in the Papal quarter, and admitted the sellers of indulgences and bulls from Rome, is difficult to understand (Perry, i. 495). If the national Church of England was a portion of the Church of Rome under Morton in 1486, then it was a portion of the Church of Rome under Bourchier in 1454; and if it was a portion of the Church of Rome under Bourchier, then it was the same under Chichely in 1414. The temporary weakness of *the Crown* made no difference whatever in the constitution, and doctrines, and unity of the Church. It was exactly what it had been for a century and a-half, if not more.

And it is equally difficult to understand what this historian means by the statement: "There could scarcely be a more complete contrast between the *state of the Church of England* under Henry VII., and its condition under Edward I. or Edward III. Its spirit, its power of resistance, its national character, were broken down; and together with the weakness of internal demoralisation, . . . the weakness of external incapacity pressed heavily upon it. It became the mere creature of the State, because the State could wield at will the power of the Pope. Its energy, its self-assertion, its self-respect were gone" (*Ibid.* 495).

To read this statement one would imagine that in the reign of Edward I., the Church in England was a vigorously independent national Church, protesting

against Rome with all its might, passing anti-Roman canons, and framing anti-Roman articles.

As a matter of fact, the Church was just as Ultramontane in the reign of Edward I., as it was in the reign of Henry VII. The Primate of the Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was surely competent to state *the position* of the Church at that time, and he said of his Church, the Church of England, to the Pope: "My Church is *your* Church, and my possessions *your* possessions," declaring thereby the English Church to be a portion of the Church of Rome located in England (*Ibid.* i. 374). The *Church* was Papal. But the *State* and the *king* were anti-Papal. Edward I. was every inch a king. He was in the truest sense, as Green says (i. 313), a *national* king. And he tried to make the Church a national Church, but was unable. The Church was against him. The Church threatened with excommunication those who favoured the Crown, and the anti-Papal statutes of the day, such as *Mortmain* or *De religiosis* were not the anti-Papal enactments of the national *Church* against Rome, but rather of the national parliament against *the Church* (Green, i. 332; Perry, i. 378).

The Church's hand was against Edward, and Edward's hand was against the Church. In fact, in 1297 he outlawed the clergy from the Archbishop downwards.

There was no difference *in the state of the Church*, either in doctrines, or clergy, or in its relations to Rome. The difference was in the state of the Crown. The king in the one place was more complacent to the Papacy. That is all.

And in the case of Edward III. it was the same. The Church was just as Papal in his day, as it was in

the reign of Henry VII. Italian cardinals were prelates of England. If there was any energy, or self-assertion, or self-respect in the realm, any spirit, or power of resistance, or national character, it was certainly not in the *Church. The Church was Ultramontane in allegiance, Roman in doctrine, and Roman Catholic in communion.*

The king had national spirit. The people had national self-respect. The parliament had national character. But the Church had none of these things. The king defied the Pope, but it was not from any hatred of Popery. The Parliament passed anti-Papal statutes, asserting the rights of the English courts, but it was from no pride in the Church of England. The Church was spiritless, weak, and incapable. Dependent upon Rome it was harried by the king. Undefended by the king it was harried by the Pope (Green, i. 459). The Crown had spirit, the Church had none.

No. To be true to English Church history we must alter Canon Perry's lines, and rather say: There could scarcely be a more complete uniformity than between the state of the Church of England under Henry VII., and its condition under Edward I. or Edward III. In both cases its spirit, its power of resistance, its national character, were broken down; and together with the weakness of internal demoralisation, of which some details have been given, the weakness of internal capacity pressed heavily upon it. It became the mere creature of the Pope, because the Pope could wield at will the power of the clergy. Its energy, its self-assertion, its self-respect were gone. Not only might the national Church of England *almost be said* to cease to exist, and to become instead,

a portion of the Church of Rome located in England. It *had* ceased to exist. It *had become* instead a portion of the Church of Rome located in England. Even if the nationality of the Church were an unchallengeable fact, and the Church of England were distinctly shown to be an independent national Church in the age immediately before the Reformation, it would have little to do with the main point before us, or prove that the Church of England in those days was identical with the Church of England as it now is. For the nationality of a Church concerns merely its name and form. Its doctrine and ritual are its essential character.

But both as regards its national position and its doctrinal position, the English Church at this period was identified with Rome.

NOTE.—Collier in his "Ecclesiastical History," i. 647, refers to a concordat which was entered into after the breaking up of the Council of Constance (1414) between Pope Martin V. and the Church of England, which seems to point to the formal use of the title Ecclesia Anglicana. The name certainly was then in use, and the document in question, which a well-known Cambridge scholar, Principal Moule, of Ridley Hall, kindly verified for me in the Cambridge University Library, throws curious light upon the question.

"The Concordat of 1418 (or more exactly 1419) is given in Wilkins' 'Concilia,' vol. iii., being extracted by him ex registro Chicheley, ii. fol. 332 et 333, and is entitled Concordata et concessa per sanctissimum Dominum nostrum Martinum, papam quintum pro reformatione ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, &c." "*In the title*," Principal Moule continues, "Ecclesia Anglicana occurs. *But in the document itself* I find no case of it, only *natio* Anglicana."

The point is worth noticing. As a matter of fact, while the name, Ecclesia Anglicana, identified as it was with the older historical life of the nation, remained in ecclesiastical use, the thing itself, the reality of an independent Church, was gone.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH AND THE LOLLARDS.

The Lollards much misunderstood and misrepresented by party Church writers—Their leading principles those of the Church of England to-day—Three facts of history—No doctrine of Church of England then as distinct from Church of Rome—The main doctrinal position of the Lollards—Their denial of the Roman ordinal, and various Roman practices now abjured and denounced by the Church of England—The Lollards prosecuted not for socialistic views but for their anti-Roman doctrine—Sawtry, Badby, and Oldcastle—They were sacrificed as burnt-offerings to the mass—The meaning of the phrase heresy—The light thrown thereby upon the position of the English Church—The state of religion in the medieval Church—Two things necessary before the Church of England could be truly reformed.

WE revert now to the question that was being discussed in the last chapter but one. It was stated there that the doctrinal position of the English Church in the latter part of the fourteenth and throughout the fifteenth century was brought out in particular by the Church's treatment of the Lollards, as the disciples of John Wycliffe were popularly called, and in general by its attitude to all movements of reform.

LV. *Are, then, the teachings and opinions of the Lollards to be taken as representative of the principles of the Reformation?*

Certainly they are.

That is in the main, and as touching their substance and essence. Not by any means, of course, as regards their vagaries and excrescences. We do not

desire to champion the Lollards in any unwise or unmeasured way. They were often very mistaken, and in some things they were curiously erratic. But we do unhesitatingly assert that they deserve a fairer treatment than they have received at the hands of some English Church historians.

The Lollards were the precursors of the Reformation. They were the bridge from Wycliffe to Cranmer. It was their teaching and preaching that prepared England for the Reformation.* The truths for which they lived and died were the truths that now form some of the distinctive principles of the Church of England.

In spite of all the vagaries and abnormal developments that may have characterised the later phases of the movement and the more lawless of their name, it is clear that their central principle and cardinal doctrine is now the cardinal doctrine of the Church of England, and the central principle of the Reformation ; the Bible the supreme rule of faith and practice. Their vital principle was the sixth Article of the Church of England.

"Out of the floating mass of opinion which bore the name of Lollardry *one faith gradually evolved itself*, faith in the sole authority of the Bible as a source of religious truth" (Green, i. 495). All their actions and doctrines sprang from this; their protests against the adoration of saints and images (Art. xxii.); against pilgrimages and pardons (Art. xxii.); against the adoration of the Sacrament (Art. xxviii.); against transubstantiation (Art. xxviii.); against celibacy

* It is not a little remarkable that the Reformation movement spread most rapidly in the counties where Lollardry had been strongest.

(Art. xxxii.); and against those now discarded practices of the Church of England, auricular confession, and prayers for the dead.

Turbulent and licentious men may have been found in their ranks, as a Judas or a Simon Magus or a Demas in the Christian Church, but to deliberately represent them as turbulent and licentious sectaries (Jennings' "Ecclesia Anglicana," p. 128), or dangerous members of the community who had lost all reverence for the Church's teaching (Hore, "History of Church of England," p. 198), is hardly a fair presentation of their historical position. For the facts of history are these :—

1. There was in those days no known *doctrine* of the Church of England as distinct from the doctrine of the Church of Rome.

2. The *doctrinal* principles of the Lollards were in many important respects identical with the distinctive doctrinal principles now to be found in the Church of England. Observe that we say *doctrinal* principles.

3. The views for which the Lollards were persecuted were not their views on property or politics, but their views on matters of *doctrine*, especially the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. They were burned by the Church in England then for teaching what is the doctrine of the Church of England now.

The first point will be established as we proceed. It will be seen that the informations and accusations brought against the followers of Wycliffe were always for heresy and error as opposed to that Holy Mother Church, which is beyond all controversy, the Roman (Catholic) Church. Those who tried them, were those who held the faith and communion of the holy Church of Rome. Those who were tried, were those who taught

with regard to the sacraments and the articles of the faith otherwise than the right holy and universal Church of Rome did hold and teach (Fox, 328).

As to the second point. The main doctrinal positions of the Lollards as taken from their articles set upon the door of St. Paul's Church and exhibited to the Parliament in 1395, and their various statements and confessions in their examinations and writings, were as follows:—

1. Protest against the Romish priesthood, the rites and ceremonies of the Roman Pontifical, and the whole Roman theory of the sacrificial system.

The theory of the priest daily offering the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the people was held to be contrary to the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews. If Christ evermore sitteth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us, there is no need for a daily sacrifice to be offered by the priest. *It is not taught in the Scripture* that the body of Christ ought to be made a sacrifice for sin, but only as a sacrament and commemoration of the sacrifice passed (Fox, 248–256). In like manner the Church of England of to-day has discarded the Roman ordinal, and rejected the Roman ceremonial. The ordination service of the Church of England is totally subversive of the Roman doctrine, both as to the *signum sacramenti* and the *res sacramenti*, so that now the clergy of the Church of England are not priests in the Roman sense of the word.* The Church of Rome by specific *intention*, proper *ceremony*, and express *language* makes her ministers sacrificial priests. The Church of England makes her priests preachers of the Word

* This was written before the Papal Bull of 1896, declaring the orders of the English Church to be invalid from the Roman standpoint.

of God, and ministers of the holy Sacraments; denies the Romish doctrine of sacrifice (Art. xxxi.), and repudiates orders as a *Sacrament;* thus overturning from the foundation the whole Roman theory of the priesthood and of orders.*

2. Protest against the superstitious and erroneous practices and teachings of the Church of Rome with regard to worship and ceremonial.

They specially denounced the worship of the Cross, and the celibacy of the clergy; the use of holy water, holy oil, holy salt, and incense; the exorcisms and hallowings in baptism and the eucharist; prayers to images, pilgrimages, and the worshipping of bones and of saints; prayers for the dead, and the value of purchased intercession for the souls of godless men.

With regard to the exorcisms and conjurations which were practised and called benedictions or hallowings, they asked whether they really believed them to have the efficacy they pretended, and what difference there was between the hallowing of fire, water, incense, wax, bread, ashes, oil, salt, and other things, and the errors of the heathen magicians, soothsayers, and charmers. And as to delivering a soul from purgatory by means of prayers, they asked, how shall a simple priest deliver another man from sin by his prayers, or from the punishment of sin, when he is not able to deliver himself by his prayer from sin; or what does God so much accept in the mass of a vicious priest that for his mass, or prayer, or oblation, he will deliver any man either from sin or from the pain due for sin. This buying and selling of prayers and pardons is all deception. No

* See my work on the "Protestantism of the Prayer-Book," chapter ix. London, Shaw & Co. Third edition.

man should dare to demand or receive anything from another man for his prayers. But after all the priest only learns his lesson from the Pope, who sells bulls and pardons as openly as the begging friars or the greedy abbots (Fox, 250, 257).

It is unnecessary to remind the reader that these practices have each and all been discarded by the Church of England since the Reformation. There is no provision for any of them in the Prayer-Book, while some of them are expressly denounced in the Articles (Articles xxii., xxxii.), proving in a very clear manner the main argument of this chapter.

3. Protest against the Romish doctrine of auricular confession, Popish absolution, and that error of errors, transubstantiation. They denounced the confessional as the citadel of priestcraft and the curse of the Romish system, impeaching it as the fountain of unmentionable iniquities, and the foe of family and civil life.

They alleged that it was impossible to find any place in the gospel where Christ commanded this kind of confession should be made to the priests, or that Christ ever assigned any penance to sinners for their sins. If a sinner is truly repentant and converted to God, God will absolve him from his sin; and as God absolves him from his sins, so has Christ absolved many although they confessed not their sins to the priests, and received due penance. If Christ absolved them without priest and penance, He can do so now. They admitted that the confession of sins to good priests and other faithful Christians was good, as St. James said; but to confess sins to the priest as to a judge, and to receive of him corporal penance for a satisfaction to God, was a thing without Scriptural

warrant. With regard to the command of Christ to the leper to go show himself unto the priest, they argued that the leper was cleansed by Christ not by the priest, thus teaching in almost the express language of the Homily of Repentance the doctrine of the Church of England upon this subject. (Compare Fox, 244, and Homilies, S.P.C.K. Edition, p. 575.)

As to absolution of the Pope and the priest, with their pretended power to absolve a "*pœna et culpa*," they held that it was founded upon no warrant of Scripture, and anticipating the famous argument of Luther the German reformer, they contended that if the Pope had the power to deliver souls from the pains of purgatory, and was a really kind man, he would deliver them for charity, not for money.

As to the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, they protested against it as idolatry. They declared that the body which is in heaven could not by virtue of the priest's word be included in the little bread which they show to the people; that after consecration the material bread remains and is only His body sacramentally or memorially, Christ Himself being fed on spiritually, and by faith; and that the idea of a material change being worked by a miracle is false and superstitious (Fox, 257, 258).

This is substantially the teaching of the Church of England to-day. The Church of England has discarded the confessional box. It has abolished the practice by leaving out of the communion office all reference to auricular confession, and by removing from the rubric of the visitation of the sick any means of performing it.* The

* In the Prayer-Book of 1549 the Priest was to exhort those who were not satisfied with a general Confession to use "the auricular and

exceptional and trebly guarded provision for the confession of a sick man, a very sick man, and of the very sick man only when he *desires* it, is a very different thing from the compulsory and universal practice of the Church of Rome. The Church of England also *denies* in the *Articles* (Article xxv.) that *penance is a sacrament ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel*, and penance includes auricular confession.

As to transubstantiation, the very language almost of the Lollard teaching is embodied now in the rubric at the end of the communion office, and Articles xxviii., xxix., xxx., and xxxi. substantially represent their opinions and views as expressed in their declarations, conclusions, and confessions.

These were in the main then, directly and substantially, the doctrinal position of the Wycliffites or Lollards, and they involved not merely the negative denunciation of what was false, but the positive enunciation of that which was Scriptural, apostolic, and true. Their views on the subject of war, property, and the taking of oaths can hardly be cited as *doctrinal* principles or as illustrating their doctrinal position; nor should they be allowed to divert our minds from their real Church views. Protestants as well as Romanists may have their private opinions upon these subjects without in the least altering their main doctrinal position. Nor should the whims and Quakerisms of the extremer Lollards, or the political discontent of the later Lollards, blind us to the essential features of the theological tenets of the immediate successors of Wycliffe. The views of these

secret Confession to the Priest;" and in the Visitation of the Sick there was a rubric directing the Priest to use the form of absolution in that Office "*in all private Confessions.*"

despised and persecuted religious teachers were in the main those views which peculiarly distinguish the Church of England to-day as a Protestant Church.

The third point deserves careful attention.

It is this. That throughout all the trials of the Lollards, and the persecutions to which they were subjected, the head and front of their offending was their Protestantism. It was not for their Quakerism, or their socialism, that they were tried and burned, or for their views respecting property and simplicity in ritual. It was for their doctrine. And especially was it for their doctrine on the Supper of the Lord. Above all things it was for their opinion on the sacrament of the altar contrary to the received opinions of holy mother Church.

The persecutions of the Lollards began to assume serious proportions about 1394, after the death of Queen Ann, the Bohemian consort of Richard the Second, their unwavering friend. But it was not until the year 1401 that the infamous Statute of Heresy was passed, through the energy of the relentless Archbishop Arundel, and the co-operation of a slavish king (Stubbs' "Constitutional History," iii. 31). In origin and completion it was entirely a Romish measure. It was born in convocation and fathered by the bishops. The clergy in convocation assembled embodied a petition against divers wicked and perverse men teaching a new, wicked, and heretical *doctrine*, contrary to the Catholic faith and the determination of the holy Church; and at the beginning of the second year of the reign of Henry IV., England disgraced itself by passing what Green has aptly called the first legal enactment of religious bloodshed which defiled our Statute Book.

The law was infamous in every way. It was infamous from the legal standpoint, from the moral standpoint, and from the religious standpoint. It destroyed the foundation principle of English law; the right of a man to trial by a judge of the land, or a jury of his peers. Any ignorant or vicious prelate or his commissaries could procure the arrest and condemnation of a suspected man (Fox, 268). It committed virtuous and law-abiding churchmen to prison for the atrocious crime of reading a writing of Wycliffe, or an apostolic epistle. It brought men to the stake for daring to disbelieve a doctrine that contradicted the Bible, common sense, and the Church's teaching for centuries.*

The first man burned in England was William Sawtre or Sawtry, the parish priest of St. Osith in London. He was condemned by convocation, as a heretic to be punished for the crime of *heresy;* was solemnly degraded from the priesthood in St. Paul's Cathedral on the 26th of February, 1401, by Arundel "by the authority of Omnipotent God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost;" and was committed with most undignified haste (Stubbs, iii. 358) by "our holy mother the Church" to the secular power to be burned with fire. Yet, as Southey points out in his Book of the Church (p. 191), the single question with which he was pressed, and *the one thing for which he was condemned*, was whether the sacrament of the altar, after the sacramental words were spoken, remained bread or not. The bulk of the questioning of Arundel in his examination was with regard to his belief in transubstantiation.

* For a fuller account of the legislation against heresy *see* Stubbs' "Constitutional History," iii. 357–362.

It was the same with John Badby, the second martyr for the principles of the Reformation. He was accused of the crime of heresy. His heresy was maintaining that after consecration "the material bread remains upon the altar;" or that transubstantiation is not only repugnant to the plain teaching of Scripture, but overthrows the nature of a sacrament. He, too, was burned with fire, in spite of the efforts of Prince Henry to save his life, for believing a doctrine that was declared to be contrary to the "*Catholic*" faith, and the decrees of holy Church.

It was the same with Lord Cobham, the greatest Protestant of them all. Cobham suffered as a heretic not as a traitor, says Southey; his indictment for high treason is a forgery. Many who read the account of his trials will be inclined to the same conclusion. His life turned not on his political views, but on his views concerning the faith of holy Church; if he had not been a Lollard he would never have been troubled. The assertion of the author of "Ecclesia Anglicana," that it is really unknown whether Oldcastle was in any true sense a religious man, is surely to be accepted with caution. Religious in the Roman sense he perhaps was not; but that he was a good man is the testimony of many impartial writers, the common people of England, and our greatest poet. In this trial before Arundel and the bishops Lord Cobham confessed that in his former days he was a vicious man, but that he was brought to lead a new life by the despised doctrine of Wycliffe. He had become a converted man. As a man who had been transformed by the power of the Gospel, he did all in his power to spread

the doctrines of grace, and it was for this he was arrested and tried.

The wording of the writing sent to him by Arundel and the clergy, is worth reading: "The faith and determination of the holy Church touching the blissful sacrament of the altar is this; that the material bread, after the sacramental words are once spoken by a priest in his mass, is turned into Christ's very body, and so there remains in the sacrament of the altar, no material bread, nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken. Holy Church hath determined that every Christian man ought to confess to a priest, ordained by the Church, if he may come to him."

"Christ ordained St. Peter, the Apostle, to be His vicar here on earth, whose see is the holy Church of Rome, and He granted that the same power which He gave St. Peter should succeed to all Peter's successors, whom we now call Popes of Rome; by whose power in particular churches, are ordained prelates, as archbishops, bishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees, whom Christian men ought to obey after the laws of the Church of Rome.

"Holy Church has determined that it is meritorious to a Christian man to go on pilgrimages to holy places; and there especially to worship holy relics and images of saints, apostles, and martyrs, confessors and all other saints beside, approved by the Church of Rome." And with regard to each question Cobham was asked: how believe ye, how feel ye this article.

The answer he gave to these questions afterwards was clear and bold, but the point of interest is,

that throughout these sentences the holy Church of Rome and holy Church are identified, and that in the third article the unity of the Roman "Catholic" Church is plainly declared.

The examination of Cobham was prolonged and involved, and while there is not a little mystery and contradiction with regard to his latter days, one thing stands out prominently in all his career, the relentless hatred of the clergy to all that savoured of what they call heresy. "Oldcastle died a martyr," is the testimony of our Shakespeare. And his testimony is true. For Oldcastle held views far wide from the then "Catholic Church," that is from what "the holy and universal Church of Rome hath said" as the sentence of his condemnation put it (Fox, pp. 286, 287), and was condemned as a heretic, *especially* as regarded the blessed sacrament of the altar. It may be open to question whether his being hanged in chains denoted his guilt as a traitor, but no one can doubt that his chief crime was his Protestantism. In the parliamentary record of the time he is mentioned as "Sir John Oldcastle, knight, heretic," and Fox remarks that Sir John in the record here is called not traitor, but heretic only. It was the same with all the sufferers. They were condemned and burned as *heretics*, not as revolutionists. They were burned, not for teaching socialism, but because they believed what is now the teaching of the Church of England in the 22nd, 32nd, and 28th Articles.

"That there were among the Lollards," says Southey, "some fanatics who held levelling opinions in their utmost extent, may be well believed. *But it is worthy of notice that in all the records which remain*

of this persecution, in no one instance has the victim been charged with such principles. In every case they were questions upon those points which make the difference between the reformed and the Romish religion; in every case they were sacrificed as burnt offerings to the Mass" (Book of the Church, p. 207).

As these victims of Rome were sacrificed as heretics, and all through the fifteenth to the earlier part of the sixteenth eentury the word heresy very frequently occurs, it will be worth while to discuss at this point the precise meaning of this term.

LVI. *What then is meant by heresy, and what light does it throw upon the position of the Church in that age?*

It is an interesting question.

Etymologically, heresy implies the taking of a position contrary to that which is generally received. Hence, it implies the adoption of principles which are at variance with the principles universally held. Ecclesiastically, it means the acceptance of opinions contrary to the established religious faith.

All through this period heresy had but one meaning. It meant the holding of anything and everything "contrary to the Catholic faith, and determination of the holy Church."

In the bull of Pope Gregory about Wycliffe (1378), his teachings are declared to be "false and erroneous conclusions, and most *wicked and damnable heresies*, mischievous heresies, pestilent heresies." The Archbishop of Canterbury termed them "heretical and erroneous conclusions, contrary to the determination of holy Church;" and described Wycliffe and his associates who were suspected of heresy, as dangerous persons, "to be shunned as a serpent

which puts forth most pestiferous poison," and their followers as those who "have strayed from the Catholic faith."

The decree of the Council of Constance (1414), condemning Wycliffe as a heretic against the Christian religion and the Catholic faith was in part as follows: This most holy synod hath caused the said articles (of Wycliffe), to be examined by many most reverend fathers of the Church of Rome, cardinals, bishops, abbots *et al.*, which articles being so examined, it was found that many of them were to be notoriously reproved and condemned as heretical, and that they do induce and bring into the Church unsound and unwholesome doctrine, contrary to the faith and ordinance of the Church. It formally condemned him also as a notorious obstinate heretic; declared that he died in his heresy; and cursed and condemned both him and his memory.

And to quote one more instance. Pope Boniface IX. in his bull against the Lollards (1392), describes the Lollards as "the damnable shadows or ghosts of men who rose up against the sound faith and Holy Universal (Catholic) Church of Rome, and preached erroneous, detestable, and heretical articles" (Fox).

Heresy, then, had simply to do with holy mother Church, and the so-called Catholic faith. It was contrariety to the Church. The simplest thing in the world was heresy, if it was contrary to the Church. To have an opinion was heresy. To read a tract was heresy. To exercise the slightest act of private judgment was heresy. To have a Bible was heresy. To believe what the Bible said about certain things was heresy. To dispute the value of relic-worship was heresy. To question the usefulness of pilgrim-

ages was heresy. To refuse to adore the Cross was heresy. To doubt transubstantiation was heresy. In one word, to hold, preach, or teach anything, *anything* contrary to the Catholic faith, or the holy Church of Rome, was heresy.

But the strangest thing about the matter was that no statutory or authoritative definition of heresy ever seems to have been made. A man might be a perjurer, a drunkard, an adulterer, or an incestuous person, and yet be uncondemned by the Church. One Pope had sixteen children. A number of bishops kept mistresses. It was quite common for priests and nuns to live in open immorality (Froude's "Erasmus," xi. 68–121; 126–147). Yet if one swallowed without wavering all the blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits, which were then put to the front in the teaching of holy mother Church, he was accounted a good churchman, and to be a good churchman covered a multitude of sins. But if he taught his child to say the Lord's Prayer in his native tongue, or to repeat the ten commandments, he was a heretic. To believe anything that the Pope, or the cardinal, or the priest did not believe, or to do anything that holy Church did not authorise, however good and holy, was quite enough to get a man burned for heresy. As Erasmus sarcastically remarked, homicide, parricide, incest and sodomy, these could be got over; but marriage was fatal.

Yet the reader must not fail to observe here that heresy had nothing whatever to do with believing what was contrary to truth, or contrary to the Scripture, or even contrary to antiquity. It might be supposed that heresy implied the holding of principles at variance with the teaching of Christ and the holy

apostles. By no means. Heresy had nothing to do with the doctrine of the primitive Church, and of the apostolic fathers, or even of the undisputed councils. It has been the glory of the Church of England since the Reformation that her teaching is the restoration in its primitive purity of the doctrine of Christ and His apostles. But there was no thought of any such thing in the mind of Churchmen in the fifteenth century. No heretic was ever impeached upon the ground that his teaching was at variance with the teaching of the Scripture and the primitive Church, and, *therefore*, with the teaching of the Church of England. Nor was the argument ever employed that, inasmuch as the Church of England represented antiquity and apostolic doctrine, he who taught what was contrary to apostolic doctrine was to be condemned as a heretic against the English Church.

No.

Heresy against the Church *of England* was never mentioned. It was never thought of. The heretic was a person who was at variance, not with the English Church, but with the *Roman* Church. His crime was not that as an Englishman, he had set forth something that contradicted the national Church, but that as a Churchman he taught things contrary to the holy universal Church of Rome.

In all the bulls and citations and processes against Wycliffe and the Lollards, the faith that is endangered by their heresies is the " Catholic " faith, and the Church that is defamed is the holy Church of Rome. (The reader is again referred to Fox, Book v. *passim.*) There is no mention of the faith of the English Church.

LVII. *Heresy, then, simply meant the declaration of any opinion or doctrine that was judged by any bishop*

or his commissaries to be contrary to the determination of holy mother Church?

That was all. And for as much as the only faith known was the Catholic faith of the Roman Church, there being no nationality of Church creed or doctrine, this heresy was simply against the apostate faith of the erring Church of Rome.

LVIII. *In that case, then, in the true and Scriptural sense it was an honour to be considered heretical?*

It certainly was.

If Scripture and Church teaching are to be taken as standards, the persecuted were the truly orthodox, and their persecutors the true heretics. Wycliffe could have proudly said with St. Paul, "But this I confess that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." The prevalent Church teaching of the age was pernicious. "Reverence in things Divine," says the Roman Cardinal Bellarmine, "was almost gone, religion was almost extinct." Church religion in England simply meant Popery, and Popery simply meant idolatry. "The Catholic religion of the fifteenth century differed only in name from the paganism of the old world. The saints had taken the place of the gods. Their biographies were as full of lies and as childish and absurd as the old theogonies. Instead of praying to Christ, the faithful were taught to pray to miracle-working images and relics. The Virgin, multiplied into a thousand personalities, . . . was at once queen of heaven and a local goddess. Pious pilgrimages and indulgences had taken the place of moral duty. The service of God was the repeating masses by priests, who sold them for so much a dozen. In the

exuberance of their power, the clergy seemed to exult in showing contempt of God and man by the licentiousness of their lives and the insolence of their dominion. This extraordinary system rested on the belief that they had supernatural powers as successors of the apostles" (Froude's "Erasmus," pp. 66, 119, 122). The grossest ignorance, the most debasing superstition, the most open idolatry, had everywhere taken the place of faith. The foremost doctrines of the Church were absolutely false. Transubstantiation was a falsehood. Purgatory was a falsehood. The so-called miracles were "lying wonders." The Papal pretension was a figment. The saint system of intercession was a delusion. The mediation of the Virgin was a dangerous deceit. The religion of England was a fabric of superstition, maintained by priestcraft, on a foundation of fiction (Art. xxii.). And yet these things, false in origin, false in essence, and false in operation, the miracle of the mass, the miracle of relics, the legendary impostures, and the mediation system of saints and angels, were the apparent sum and substance of the Romish religion (Mosheim, "Ecclesiastical History," Book iv. chap. 1). And to protest against any of them, or even to hint that they were what they were, or to say that they were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits, was false doctrine, heresy and schism.

In view of all this, it must be admitted from the present standpoint of the Church of England, that to be accounted a heretic in England during the fifteenth century was indeed an honour. There were many who attained this honour, and would not bow the knee to the Roman Baal. Some were blasphemed and slandered by so-called Catholic Churchmen, and

others had trial of cruel mocking and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment; they were destitute, afflicted and tormented. A number were tortured and burned in the fire. But as the Scripture is true, and the present teaching of the Church of England is true, though condemned by Rome, they were not guilty of heresy (Fox, p. 233). And the blood of these men was the seed of the Reformation.

LIX. *If this, then, was the state of the Church in England, the Protestantism of the Church of England could not really be said to have begun?*

No.

For any doctrinal Protestantism was confined to individuals, and so far from being asserted by the Church, was condemned by it as heresy; and any political Protestantism was legal and parliamentary and only emphasised the rights of the Crown, not the anti-Romanism of the Church. The Church had never by statute, article, or canon, ever declared its independence of the temporal or spiritual headship of the Pope, or even dreamed of such a thing. The idea of the Pope's having no jurisdiction whatsoever in the Church of England was not entertained in the real sense until the sixteenth century.

LX. *In order, then, for the Church of England to become in the true sense a Reformed and Protestant Church, what would be necessary?*

Two things would be necessary.

It would be necessary, in the first place, to be emancipated from the Pope; and in the next place, to be emancipated from Popery. Or it might be put thus: It would be necessary for the Church of England to be nationally and ecclesiastically free, that is, to be separated from Rome and the Papal supremacy;

and also to be doctrinally and spiritually free, that is, to be separated from Popery and the corruptions of the Romish religion. England's Church must be separated from the unity of Rome, and renounce the headship of the Pope as a spiritual and temporal ruler. And the doctrine of the Church of England must be freed from the corruption which had cumbered and adulterated the apostolic faith. The Church which was *de*formed must be *re*formed; and a Reformed Church is synonymous with a Protestant Church.

In other words.

The national and individual Protestantism of William the Conqueror, Edward III., Langton, and Grosseteste, must become the accepted ecclesiastical Protestantism of the Church of England *as a national Church*, repudiating *as a Church* the right as well as the fact of the Papal supremacy; and the private, personal, doctrinal Protestantism of a Bradwardine, a Wycliffe, a Sawtre, and others, must become not merely the doctrine and teaching of a few individual reformers or bishops in the Church, but the *bona fide* and accepted doctrine of the Church as a Church, formally and clearly expressed as the true teaching of the Church in her standards, and formularies, and rubrics, and canons, and liturgy.

The steps by which both these things were accomplished mark a series of events in English ecclesiastical history, so remarkable that nothing but the manifest over-ruling of God's providential hand in every step can satisfactorily explain them. But, before we refer to these more particularly, it will be helpful to glance for a moment at the general preparatory movements of the age for this great epoch in our history.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PREPARATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH FOR THE REFORMATION.

The Reformation not the work of a day—The preparation of events, and the preparation of men—Discovery, art, science, and the printing press—The New Testament in Greek—The character and work of Erasmus—His sarcasms and exposures of Romish falsities—Erasmus not a Protestant—He desired reform, but only of a limited kind—The proto-Reformation movement in England, and its advocates—The advocates of reform in morals: Wolsey, Warham—The educational reformers—John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's—Sir Thomas More—The precise position of Erasmus on the subject of Church Reform—A reform of the Church by the Pope and princes—It was a purely Roman idea of reform.

THE Reformation was not the work of a day. Its foundations were laid deep in the nature of things. Its roots lay in the ages. Its causes were the co-operation of the thoughts of many thinkers and the events of many years. It was the result of a deeply-laid train of coincidences. The great things that mark an age, and the great men that make history, converged as if by arrangement. It was not accidental; it was providential.

The Reformation was of God.

The Divine preparation for this great continental and national movement may be briefly described as a preparation of events, and a preparation of men. In the first place, there was a general preparation of the world for a new religious movement. As a giant out of slumber, the world was awakening out of the

deep sleep of the Middle Ages. Science was beginning to tell the secrets of Nature, and to startle the world with its wonders. Art, with its pleasing touch, was refining the mind. The great masters, Michael Angelo and Raphael, elevated painting and sculpture to heights since unattained. Discovery was enlarging the bounds of the world, and navigators were conquering continents. Merchants were blending races once remote, and carrying to many lands not only merchandise but ideas. The thoughts of men were widening. The world was waking.

And then, strangely and providentially, there had arisen that miracle of the period, the printing press. What steam and electricity were to the nineteenth century, the art of printing was to the sixteenth century and the latter half of the fifteenth. The demand was created by the supply. The supply augmented the demand. The age became hungry. At the time of the Reformation it was like the horse-leech that hath two daughters crying Give, give! The more it received, the more it desired. It had been starved with the famine of ignorance so long, that, when it began to taste knowledge, it craved for more and more. And the book it most needed was God's.

And then strangely and providentially a new language was introduced; and in that new language a new book was printed; and with that new book appeared new teachers.

For centuries the ecclesiastics had never dreamed of learning Greek. A large number of them scarcely knew Latin. But a change was coming. The *magnum opus* of the clever Dutchman Erasmus (1467–1536), the New Testament in Greek, may be taken as the mark of a new era. Educationally and spiritually, it

was the first stage in the greatest revolutionary movement in the history of Christendom. The educationalists of the day saw that the days of Latin were numbered. It had reigned in splendid isolation long enough. The language of Aristotle, Plato, and Paul, must be given a place. Oxford introduced its study, and later, Cambridge. Archbishop Warham patronised its teachers. William Grocyn, Thomas Linacre, and above all Dean Colet, its friends and advocates, became the precursors of the principles of reform. Bishop Fox founded Corpus Christi College at Oxford, for the special purpose of furthering the study of the three great learned languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

In spite of scholastic conservatism Greek became the rage. The foremost men of England began it. The young men of the day, the prophets and promise of an epoch, were in the van. "The number of young men who are studying ancient literature in England is astonishing." This is what Erasmus wrote to a friend as early as 1498. And the chief subject of study was the New Testament. The preparatory work done for the Reformation, therefore, by the introduction of Greek, and especially by Erasmus' Greek Testament (1516) can scarcely be over-rated.

Froude tells us, in his Erasmus, what the appearance of that book meant. "The Christian religion, as taught and practised in Western Europe and the British Isles, consisted of the mass and the confessional, of elaborate ceremonials, rituals, processions, pilgrimages, prayers to the Virgin and the saints, with dispensations and indulgences for laws broken or duties left undone. Of the Gospels and Epistles so much only was known to the laity as was read in the

Church services, and that was intoned as if to be purposely unintelligible to the understanding. Of the rest of the Bible nothing was known at all. The New Testament, to the mass of Christians, was an unknown book. Erasmus undertook to give the book to the whole world to read for itself, the original Greek of the Epistles and Gospels, with a new Latin translation, and a few remarks and commentaries of his own."

"It was finished at last, text and translation printed, and the living facts of Christianity, the persons of Christ and the apostles, their history, their lives, their teaching, were revealed to an astonished world. For the first time the laity were able to see, side by side, the Christianity which converted the world, and the Christianity of the Church with a Borgia Pope, cardinal princes, ecclesiastical courts, and a mythology of lies. The effect was to be a spiritual earthquake" (Froude's "Erasmus," 67, 119, 120). What it did was to shake the Romish system to the centre, and awaken the religious world from the lethargy of centuries.

Considering the age Erasmus' Greek Testament was a marvel of critical accuracy and daring independence. By the original text, he overthrew the long undisputed supremacy of the Vulgate, and by his expository and explanatory notes he became a pioneer of sound and Scriptural Bible exposition.*

And yet it is a question whether the positive work of Erasmus was as great as the negative. The paraphrases seemed to effect what even the text could not

* The popularity of the New Testament by Erasmus was extraordinary. Edition after edition was published in the endeavour to supply the demand. According to Froude *a hundred thousand* copies were sold in France alone.

as yet, and his satires and exposures were more popular than his translations. The age that was unprepared for a Luther and a Cranmer and a Ridley, was ready for an Erasmus. Much preparatory work had to be done beforehand. Strongholds of superstition had to be demolished, and fabrics of ignorance to be blown up. A man was needed to clear the way for the foundations; one who was able "to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down."

The man for the hour was Erasmus.

With the dynamite of ridicule he blew up the stronghold of superstition. He hated medievalism with a deadly hatred. He despised superstition. Monks and friars, he loathed as pests and vermin. Vile rascals, he generally called them. Ecclesiastics, in general, were bats and owls who hated light. The theologians of the day were "men whose brains were the rottenest, intellects the dullest, doctrines the thorniest, manners the brutalest, lives the foulest, speech the spitefullest, hearts the blackest, that he could conceive of." By far the cleverest man of the day, he saw at a glance the falsity of the whole religion of the age. It called itself Christian; Erasmus saw that it was a sham. It was a perfect travesty of Christianity. "There is no religion in it save forms. Religion is nothing but ritual."

Obedience, he said in one of his letters, is the great thing with priests and monks, not to God, but to bishops and abbots. Here is a case: "An abbot is a fool or a drunkard. He issues an order to the brotherhood in the name of holy obedience. And what will such an order be? An order to observe chastity? An order to be sober? An order to tell no lies? Not one of these things. It will be that *a brother is not to* learn

Greek. He may be a sot. He may go with prostitutes. He may be full of hatred and malice. He may never look inside the Scriptures. No matter. He has not broken any oath. *He is an excellent member of the community.* But if he disobeys a command from an insolent superior, there is a stake or a dungeon for him instantly" (*Ibid.*, p. 68).

The more Erasmus read the New Testament, the more he hated the monstrosity that had taken the place of Christ's religion. To expose and correct abuses, to turn in the light on the dark places, became the very passion of his life; and in his letters, his Encomium Moriæ, and the Dialogue of Julius, which has every appearance of being his work, he out-Lucianed Lucian. Here, for example, are some of his paraphrases :—

"Men are threatened or tempted into vows of celibacy. They can have licence to go with harlots, but they must not marry wives. They may keep concubines and remain priests. If they take wives they are thrown to the flames."

"The Virgin's milk is exhibited for money, with as much honour paid to it as to the consecrated body of Christ, and the miraculous oil, and portions of the true Cross, enough, if collected, to freight a large ship. Here we have the hood of St. Francis, Our Lady's petticoat, St. Anne's comb, St. Thomas' shoes; not presented *as innocent aids to religion*, but *as the substance of religion itself*."

"They chant nowadays in our churches in what is an unknown tongue, and nothing else, while you will not hear a sermon once in six months telling people to amend their lives. Church music is so constructed that the congregation cannot hear one distinct word.

The choristers themselves do not understand what they are singing, yet, according to priests and monks, it constitutes the whole of religion."

"Our theologians call it a sign of holiness to be unable to read. They bray out the Psalms in the churches like so many jackasses. They do not understand a word of them. The friars pretend to resemble the apostles, and they are filthy, ignorant, impudent vagabonds" (*Ibid.*, pp. 121, 122, 132).

And so on, and so on. His sarcasms were simply merciless. They fell on the great army of priests and monks, as Dante's shower of fire upon the agonising souls. He spared no one. Cardinals and Popes, bishops and abbots, alike were lashed with his scourge of scorn. The world was amazed. The Church was speechless with rage. The printing press, like a thousand couriers, carried his works over Europe; and the axe which was to bring down the vast Upas growth of superstition was laid to the root of the tree. Twenty-seven editions of the Praise of Folly are said to have been published in his lifetime, and one printer is reported to have struck off 20,000 copies of the Colloquies in one edition.

In fact, one can hardly think of the extraordinary work of this extraordinary man, without coming to the conclusion that in the strange providence of God he was raised up to do a pre-Reformation work that *had* to be done, and that no other character *could have done* so well. A Protestant could not have done it. The Church would have taken no notice of him. A Lollard could not have done it. Nor could even a narrow provincialist, however able, have done it. It needed a clever man of cosmopolitan culture, and, above all, a Romanist.

Erasmus was all these things. He was clever to a degree. He was the most brilliant *litterateur* of the day. He was, for his age, remarkably broad-minded; a wide thinker, a man of the world, the friend and co-worker of the author of the "Utopia." And, above all, he was a Romanist. Again and again, and to the last, he reiterates his loyalty to the Pope. "Erasmus will always be found on the side of the Roman See." "Christ I know; Luther I know not. The Roman Church I know, and death will not part me from it till the Church departs from Christ." "I have not deviated in what I have written one hair's breadth from the Church's teaching." "I advise every one who consults me to submit to the Pope." "The Holy See needs no support from such a worm as I am, but I shall declare that I mean to stand by it." "I am not so mad as to fly in the face of the Vicar of Christ." "Erasmus will always be a faithful subject of the Roman See." "Who am I that I should contradict the Catholic Church?" "I shall stand on the rock of Peter" (*Ibid.*, pp. 210, 216, 253, 254, 261, 262, 264, 272, 279, 280).

Thus, in the wisdom of Him whose ways are inexplorable, the most effectual pioneer in the necessary work of uprooting the errors of the Romish system, was a man whose life attitude towards the Church of Rome may be summed up in his memorable assertion: "It is not for me to sentence Luther; but if the worst comes to the worst, and the Church is divided, I shall stand on the rock of Peter."

LXI. *Then Erasmus was in no true sense of the word a Protestant?*

A Protestant? No.

He was not a Protestant; he was a satirist. In

the modern Church sense there was not a vestige of Protestantism in his writings. He was a caricaturist. He was a critic. He looked at things in a totally different way from Luther, or Ridley, or Cranmer. He hated shams, and lies, and tyranny; and nothing pleased him more than to ridicule the absurdities and mummery of the Popish system. But his satire never seems to have been inspired by any profound conviction of New Testament truth, or the reality of spiritual religion. He saw the folly of superstition, but not the beauty of apostolic doctrine. He abominated imposture; but, as Froude says, he had none of the passionate horror of falsehood in sacred things which inspired the new movement.

It seems to me that this sentence of Froude puts Erasmus' whole position in a nutshell. There was no trace in Erasmus of that which was the essence of the evangelical Protestantism of the English Church Reformers; the passionate horror of falsehood in sacred things, of the falsity of transubstantiation and of the mass, of purgatory, and image worship, and of the Romish ceremonial. As to his being a martyr, it is amusing to see how he laughed at the idea. "Others may be martyrs if they like. I aspire to no such honour" (*Ibid.*, p. 272). Erasmus had not the stuff of which Reformers are made. He would have made what the world calls a good politician, but he never would have made a Reformer. "Men will never follow Laodiceans like Erasmus."

LXII. *But was not Erasmus a Reformer? Did he not earnestly long for and aspire for Church reform?*

Yes.

In a sense he did. The whole career of Erasmus

was actuated by this desire. As far as he was capable of earnestness, he earnestly longed for it. But it was reform of a very moderate and a very well-defined kind.

It was simply a reform of morals *in* the Church, to be carried out by the Pope, and the princes of the realm. It was not reform *of* the Church. It was utterly different from the reform that was accomplished in the Reformation of the Church of England; absolute separation from the Roman supremacy, and an entire reconstruction of the Church's doctrinal and liturgical system. It never contemplated such a thing as the abolition of the authority of the Pope of Rome, or the denunciation of its cardinal doctrines and usages. Such Church teaching as the twenty-second, twenty-eighth, or thirty-first Articles of the Church of England, would have been heresy to Erasmus. His only idea was a reform *in* the Church *by* the Church. According to his theory, Rome was to cast out Rome.

And though it seems strange to us in these days, who know the men and their views, and knowing them, understand how impossible it was that a Church diseased with so many and great cankers could be healed by the sprinkling of a little Roman rose water, there were at the beginning of the sixteenth century not a few earnest and serious churchmen who fondly dreamed this dream. The awakening of new desires, the growing intelligence of the middle classes, the spread of education, the decay of credulity, the demand for truth, coinciding as they did with a king of such a stamp as Henry VIII., and a Pope of such a stamp as Leo X., seemed proof to many minds that the hour had come.

In the Church of England this proto-Reformation movement found many advocates. There were those on the one hand like Morton and Warham, and Wolsey and Fisher, whose sole idea of Reformation was lopping off a few of the extremities and excrescences of moral abuses. These men were ecclesiastics; they were Romish and Ultramontane. They had scarcely an idea of evangelical Protestantism. But they were keen enough to perceive the evils that were rampant in the Church, and were sufficiently in earnest to desire some kind of reform.

It was by Warham's commission that Colet set before the Convocation in 1512 his daring ideal: "Remember your name and profession, and take thought for the reformation of the Church. Never was it more necessary" (Green, ii. 88). The religious houses, like the Pharisees of old, so beautiful outward, were full within of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Something must be done. Cardinal Morton obtained a commission from the Pope to reform their corruptions. A few years later Cardinal Wolsey followed his example, and assumed the rôle of a reformer of clerical morals. Wolsey could not blind himself to the true condition of the Church. He knew well that there lay before it the alternative of ruin or amendment, and that reformation was inevitable; and he thought that it could be effected by the Church itself from within (Froude's "History of England," i. 100, 130, 133).

But their reform was only a name. It did not pretend to be church reformation in the modern sense of the word. As to any moral reform by a character like Wolsey who was a man notorious for his vicious life; it was like Satan casting out Satan.

Then there was another and a higher class, the literary or educational reformers, represented in England by Dean Colet and Sir Thomas More, and on the Continent by Erasmus. These were men of higher ideals, and deeper plans.

The first of these was John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, and an Oxford scholar. Colet was a man whom English churchmen should delight to honour. A learned man, sweet-dispositioned, earnest and pure, he played no small part as a preparer of the way. Erasmus gives us a beautiful glimpse of him in one of his charming letters, and describes him as tall and good-looking, earnest and genuine.

"He talks all the time of Christ. He hates coarse language. He is a man of genuine piety. He liked good wine, but abstained on principle. I never knew a man of sunnier nature. No one ever enjoyed cultivated society more, but here too he denied himself, and was always thinking of the life to come. He was reserved in his opinions for fear of giving wrong impressions, but to his friends he spoke freely. He thought the Scotists were stupid blockheads. He had a bad opinion of monasteries. He had a particular dislike of bishops. He said they were more like wolves than shepherds. They sold the sacraments, sold their ceremonies and absolutions. They were slaves of vanity and avarice. He approved of a fine ritual at church, but saw no reason why priests should always be muttering prayers at home, or on their walks. He admitted promptly that many things were generally taught that he did not believe, but he would not create scandal by blurting out objections."

Colet's specialty was education. Though a famous

preacher, his life passion was his great school at St. Paul's, which he founded and endowed entirely at his own cost—masters, houses, salaries, everything. There were four classes (with one hundred and fifty-three scholars in all), and only boys who could read and write were admitted. Above the head-master's chair was a picture of the child Christ, in the act of teaching; the Father in the air above with a scroll, saying, "Hear ye Him" (Froude's "Erasmus," pp. 98–100).

A fine man he must have been, of noblest mould. Though he was a strong Bible student, his views on doctrinal subjects were somewhat negatively Protestant. He did not believe in image-worship for instance, and he hated the corruptions of the age, but there is no indication that he grasped the great truths of the eleventh, nineteenth, or twenty-fifth Articles, or was inspired by any passionate horror of the falsity of ceremonial corruptions. His part in the Reformation was mainly educational. He was greatest as an influence.

Sir Thomas More was another man of this school. An ardent Romanist, with a love of freedom, and a keen sense of humour, he was a man of many parts; a judge, a law-lecturer, a teacher in theology, an ambassador, a poet, a philosopher, an author, an advocate, a privy counsellor, and Lord High Chancellor of England. In a word, he was the cleverest all-round man in England. He employed his versatile talents to expose the ignorance of the schoolmen and the vices of the priests. He was a religious sort of man too, and sharp as a needle. His "Utopia" was an extraordinary production. He hated shams and humbug, and was an advocate

of the moderate sort of reform that was the day-dream of his age. But he had no idea of radical doctrinal reform, and when the new opinions as they were called (though they were in reality the opinions of Hus, and Sawtre, and Wycliffe, and Augustine, and Paul), began to be advocated too seriously in England, he disgraced his Chancellorship by the severity of his persecutions. In fact, none of these men, not even Colet, rose to the conception of such a thing as true Church Reformation. Their ideas on the question were practically the same as those of Erasmus.

LXIII. *What, then, was the position of Erasmus and these men with regard to the subject of Church reform?*

The position of Erasmus and the educational reformers seems, in a nutshell, to have been this :—

The Church was all wrong. The morals of the clergy were degraded. The leading Church doctrines were debased. The whole Church system needed renovation, educationally and morally.

But the proper parties to carry out this reform were the heads of the Church and the heads of the nation. It was not the work for a few irresponsible upstarts like Luther. It was not a work to be done by fanatical appeals to popular passion.

It was a solemn duty, to be undertaken by the Church, in the Church, and for the Church. It was not to be an interference with the doctrine, the sacraments, the ritual, and the orders, of holy mother Church. The sacred ark should not be cleansed by unconsecrated hands. Religion should be purified, but authority upheld. There was Herculean work to be done. The removal of the excrescences was, indeed, a cleansing of Augean stables. But the proper person to do this work was the Pope. The successor

of Peter should be Christ's Hercules, "Augeæ stabulum repurgare." The princes of the empire and the various kings would, *ex-officio* and naturally, be his chief assistants, and by their united efforts the work would be peacefully accomplished. Yet it was to be done in a seemly manner; there was to be no violence, no noise, no revolutionary iconoclasm or quack catholicons. It was to be done by the authorised physician, and by the cautious administration of regularly prescribed medicines.

This seems to have been their idea of the Reformation. And there was no doubt that at one time Erasmus really believed that it was going to be brought about. With a Henry VIII. on the throne of England and a Leo X. on the throne of Peter and head of the holy Roman empire; his New Testament and his Jerome sanctioned by the Pope, and himself commended for an English bishopric; it is not strange that Erasmus thought that the golden age had already come, and that the longed-for Reformation had well begun.

Erasmus, encouraged by the Pope's encouragement of art and learning, and especially by Leo's encouragement of himself, believed that they were on the eve of a general reformation, undertaken by the Church itself (*Ibid.*, 289). When Leo X. died, and Hadrian VI. succeeded him, Erasmus still had hopes. "With Charles V. and Hadrian working together at Roman reform, all might yet go well" (p. 303).

It was a vain dream. If a luxurious, Gallio-like Leo X., a man utterly destitute of religious earnestness, was incapable of reforming the Church, equally so was a Demas-like Hadrian, who found that the abolition of indulgences and simony would mean

the sacrifice of two-thirds of his princely income, and whose main objects in life were the reformation of the Church of Rome and the *suppression of the Lutheran heresy* (Kurtz, ii. 49). Erasmus' panacea of Papal reform was a castle in the air. God had other plans than that.

It would have been a profitless task to have merely lopped off a few branches or leaves of superstitious usage while the root of the tree remained untouched. And what hope of reform could there possibly have been from a prelate who accepted unhesitatingly every article of the apostate system of medievalism; or from a body of teachers to whom the denial of transubstantiation was heresy, and the repudiation of the mass the sin of schism. From such men reformation in the Church of England sense was utterly impossible. They might have amended, they could not have reformed.

The student of English Church history can gain a clear idea of the meaning of the great Reformation of the sixteenth century by contrasting what was actually accomplished in the reformation of the Church of England with the Erasmus conception of Church reform.

It is historically certain that if Erasmus' conception of Church reformation had been brought about, there would have been no such reformation of the Church as was in the providence of God accomplished in England. There would have been no separation from the unity of Rome, or abolition of the Papal supremacy. There would have been no Book of Common Prayer, and no Lord's Supper or Communion Office in English. The missals of Sarum, and York, and Hereford, or what was practically the same thing, the missal of Rome,

for the Sarum mass was the Roman mass pure and simple,* would doubtless still have obtained in the Church of England. There would have been no change in the ordinal, no Church teaching like that from the nineteenth to the thirty-first Articles, to say nothing of the sixth and the eleventh. Neither the Pope nor Popery would have been cast out. A change would have been effected, but it would have been a change of the most moderate and trivial character.

This is a thought of cardinal importance.

If it is clearly understood and firmly grasped, the student will never be confounded in his reading of English Church history. He will be in a position to rightly distinguish things that differ. He will understand how men can be Romanists, and yet zealots for reform; and be eager for reform, without being evangelical Protestants. He will also clearly see how, in the working of the events of those formative years, the work of Colet, and Grocyn, and Linacre, and Lily, and More, wide reaching and earnest though it was, was, after all, only the work of the men who plough the field in preparation for the harvest; and how the labours of Warham, and Wolsey, and Erasmus were the labours of men who pull down and root up, but know not how to build.

Much more was needed than that.

Truth in doctrine was needed. The revival and restoration of the doctrine of Christ and His apostles.

Truth in worship was needed. The abolition of the ceremonial of superstition, and the introduction of a

* The identity of the Sarum Mass with the Roman in every essential feature will be evident to any one who compares the two services. *See* the "Sarum Missal" by the Church Press Company.

pure and spiritual service. And only men who knew the truth and understood it could bring this about. The reformation of the Church must be antedated by the reformation of individuals.

In one word, reformation in the *complete* sense could only be effected by the agency of men who were themselves personally enlightened by God's Spirit, and taught of God in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Educationalists like Colet and Erasmus could prepare the way. Politicians like Henry VIII. and Cromwell could precipitate national crises. But only men like Tyndale, and Bilney, and Latimer, and Ridley, and Cranmer, the last to be enlightened but not the least in work, could bring about doctrinal restoration, and hand on to succeeding ages a Church that was indeed, and in the true sense, reformed.

As the spiritual side of the preparation of England, though of great importance, is seldom accorded the prominence that should be given it by English Church writers, one of the subsequent chapters (xv.) will be devoted specially to this part of the subject.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SEPARATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH FROM ROME.

The *sine quâ non* of reformation restated—The absolute improbability of any reformation of the Church at the opening of the sixteenth century—The beginning of the reign of Henry VIII.—The splendid advantages of the young king—Two strong characteristics—His theological bent, and his imperious will—Henry VIII. to the end a bigoted Romanist—The affair of the divorce—Its beginnings obscure — Wheels within wheels, subterfuges and compromises — Cardinal Campeggio despatched to England—The matter brought to a head—England's temper rising—Henry's visitation and outbreak—The king summoned to Rome —The downfall of Wolsey—The downfall of the clergy—The downfall of the Pope—The renunciation of the Pope's supremacy by convocation—Act for abolition of Annates — The first distinctly anti-Papal statute of the reign of Henry VIII.—The statute for the restraint of appeals—The Church and nation of England separated from Rome by mutual renunciation.

WE will now proceed to the providential series of events which concurred to inaugurate the first stage in the Reformation of the Church of England.

It was stated previously that for the Church of England to be completely reformed, two things would be necessary; the separation of the Church from Roman unity, and the re-assertion by the Church of apostolic doctrine. The first would involve the rejection of the Papal supremacy by the Church of England. The second, the rejection of the distinctive doctrines of the Roman Church. Both of these things, unlikely as they appeared to human eyes, were actually accomplished, though half a century elapsed before the Reformation was complete.

When the sixteenth century opened, nothing seemed more improbable than the separation of the Church of England from Rome, and its reconstruction on primitive and Scriptural lines. It was Roman to the core. Its rulers were mostly cardinals of Rome. Its clergy were priests of Rome. Its offices were the offices of Rome. Its head was the Pope of Rome. The Church of England was as absolutely identified with the corporate life of the Church of Rome, as the heart is with the life of the body. The possibility of separation from Roman Catholic unity would have seemed as remote as its probability. No part of the Roman Catholic Church at this period was more thoroughly ultramontane in its corporate life than the Anglican section. The English Church was comparatively as Roman Catholic then as the Canadian Roman Catholic Church in the Province of Quebec is to-day. And it was the same when Henry VIII. ascended the throne.

The year 1509 may be reckoned as an epoch in the history of the Church of England, for it marks the initial year of the reign in which the great transformation of the Church was begun. In 1509 Henry VII. died, and his son Henry VIII. began his memorable reign amidst the rejoicings of the people. He was still a very young man, only eighteen years of age; and according to the universal verdict of history the youthful king was possessed of qualities that gave promise of a brilliant future. Strong in body, pleasing in manners, vigorous in mental power, high-minded and religious, he seems to have been a kind of royal paragon.

One of the writers of the day describes him as noble in his bearing, wise in counsel and a lover of all that is good and right. "This king of ours is no seeker after

gold, or gems, or mines of silver. He desires only the fame of virtue and eternal life." Another recites his gifts and accomplishments. "He is so gifted and adorned with mental accomplishments of every sort, that we believe him to have few equals in the world. He speaks English, French, Latin; understands Italian well; plays on almost every instrument; sings and composes fairly; is prudent and sage, and free from every vice." A third describes him as prudent, and liberal, and courteous, learned in all sciences, a perfect theologian, a good philosopher, and a strong man-at-arms. While a fourth declares that in addition to this, he was amongst the best physicians of the age, an engineer, an inventor, and a practical shipbuilder. Solomon himself had scarcely a better start on the royal road.

But there were two things about Henry VIII. that must be particularly referred to, as giving in a measure an explanation of some of the events of his reign with which this work is more particularly concerned; the theological bent of his mind and his imperious will. From his earliest years Henry VIII. had a strong predilection for religious subjects; and when he became a man he applied himself to the study of theology with the ardour of an ecclesiastic. "Trained from his childhood by theologians, he entered upon his reign saturated with theological prepossessions. His reading was vast, especially in theology. He had a fixed and perhaps unfortunate interest in the subject itself" (Froude's "History of England," i. 99–177). In fact, he was a better theologian than the average ecclesiastic of his day, and took the deepest interest in the stirring ecclesiastical events of the age.

Henry VIII. was, of course, from the first and throughout, a devoted Romanist. His birth, education, inclination, and conviction, all conspired to make him a thorough Papist; and in spite of all his subsequent differences with the Court of Rome on the subject of the supremacy he remained to the last an earnest Roman Catholic. In spite, also, of his early leanings to the new learning, he continued to the end the determined foe of the seditious novelties of the reformed opinions. "It has been and is my earnest wish," he wrote to Erasmus at the beginning of his reign, "to restore Christ's religion to its primitive purity, and to employ whatever talents and means I have in extinguishing heresy and giving free course to the Word of God. If you are taken away, nothing can stop the spread of heresy and impiety."

We gather from this that he was willing to acquiesce in such mild reforms within the Church as were suggested by men of the Warham stamp, but we know also only too well with what unrelenting severity he permitted the persecution of the Protestants during parts of his reign.

He was one of the first Englishmen to come forward against Luther as a public champion of Romanism, and his compilation on the seven sacraments of Rome ("Assertio septem sacramentorum adversus Martin Lutherum, &c.") was no less vigorous than his assertion of the supremacy of the Pope as a temporal sovereign. It was as a reward for Henry's anti-Protestant zeal on this occasion (1521) that the Pope bestowed upon him the title "Defensor Fidei," Defender of the Faith, a title held before by some English kings, and held ever since by English sovereigns. Nor is there any evidence that Henry VIII. was

anything else than a Romanist to his dying day. As will be subsequently shown, the affair of the Papal supremacy had nothing whatever to do with his belief in the essential features of the Romish doctrinal system, the mass priest, the mass sacrifice, and the mass service; nor is there any indication of his having grasped even in embryo the distinctive doctrinal principles of the Reformation. The part that he played in the reformation of the Church of England was a remarkable one; but it was mainly in the politico-ecclesiastical sphere.

The other thing about Henry VIII. that requires a reference, was his imperious will.

He had naturally a despotic temperament and a masterful mind. It came to him with his royal blood. If he had been an ordinary person, it would have been in all probability well curbed and held in check. But being a prince, it was seldom restrained. From the very beginning things seemed to favour its growth. The idol of the people from the day he was crowned, his wish became law. He became the spoilt child of the kingdom; pampered, wilful, wayward. As he grew in years, his will grew haughtier and more impetuous. It brooked no opposition, tolerated no resistance. It mattered little who opposed; wife, chancellor, parliament, or Pope. His forceful will defied all contradiction, until the habit of tyranny became second nature and he ruled with the *sic volo sic jubeo* spirit of a despot. He was, as Bishop Burnet quaintly puts it, one of the most uncounsellable persons in the world.

These personal characteristics of Henry were destined to play a great part in the preliminary stage of the Reformation in England. In fact,

without an understanding of them it would be difficult to intelligently follow the first stage of that great revolution, and the accomplishment of that first necessity of the English Reformation, the separation from Roman unity. To resume again our questions.

LXIV. *How was this first stage in the Reformation of the English Church brought about?*

It is a strange and complex story.

The main instrument by which it was accomplished was King Henry VIII.; the main reason of its accomplishment was the curious combination in his character of casuistry and wilfulness; and the main question at issue was the divorce from Queen Catherine of Arragon. It seems scarcely possible that the question of the validity of a marriage should have been the occasion of a great ecclesiastical revolution. But it certainly was in the English Reformation.

How the matter began will probably never be accurately determined. Some attribute it to Cardinal Wolsey, and his dream of the tiara. Others to the wiles of Anne Boleyn. But his weariness of Catherine, and his desire for a new wife and male issue had probably been working in the king's mind some time before he knew Queen Catherine's maid of honour. It seems more likely, as Southey has suggested, that in Henry's case the wish was father to the thought; and that the same theological turn of mind, which led him to come forward as the champion of the Church, became the cause of his defections from it, when he applied his casuistry to the purpose for which theological training was chiefly employed in the Middle Ages, that of making his conscience conform to his inclinations ("Book of the Church," p. 216).

There is abundant proof that at the time of the

marriage Henry had doubts of its validity, and that the protesting prelates, Warham and Fox, only echoed his own recorded protests. Still if everything had gone as Henry wished, and the male children his wife bore him had lived, the scruples about which he became suddenly so concerned would probably never have troubled him.

But his male issue did not live; the future of the kingdom seemed serious; and he was getting tired of his rapidly aging wife. So the scruples grew, and the scruples deepened, and the question began to assume quite serious proportions. His ecclesiastical investigations upon the subject, of course, confirmed him in his uneasiness, and the thing was determined.

There must be a divorce.

To us in these days the whole history of this perplexing affair with its intrigues, and collusions, and Machiavelian stratagems, seems almost incredible. But one must remember that in those days the Roman system of casuistry had played so fast and loose with the marriage bond that it was a matter of almost every day occurrence for the Pope to upset the validity of a marriage contract, and that the closeness of the political relations of England and the courts of Rome, and France, and Germany, created wheels within wheels of diplomatic perplexities. The Pope claimed practically the power to legitimate or invalidate any marriage (Froude, i. 137). He could override with a dash of his pen the most natural of the prohibited degrees. He could divorce on the flimsiest grounds a legally married couple. "Sæpenumero antehac fecerat." He had done so again and again. And there was no reason that he should not do so in the case of Henry VIII.

It happened, however, that in the king's matter he was placed in a desperate dilemma, for if he granted it, Charles V. would cast him out of Rome; if he did not grant it Henry VIII. would cast him out of England. The result was a series of subterfuges and compromises, and delays that pleased nobody, overturned Wolsey, stirred Henry to fury, and precipitated the downfall of the Pope in England.

LXV. *What was the course of events in connection with the divorce in England?*

Briefly stated it was as follows:—

The matter really began in England with a sham trial of Henry in 1527 for having married his brother's wife unlawfully. The Pope with the aid of Wolsey, had trumped up this scheme for disposing of the whole matter in the Legatine Court in England without Catherine knowing anything about it. This scheme having fallen through, the king and Wolsey ventured other plans, Henry sending a mission to the Pope, and Wolsey plying the archbishop and the Queen's confessor.

The Pope was artful. He did not exactly care to authorise a second marriage, for that would place him in the awkward predicament of invalidating a previous Papal dispensation; nor did he exactly care to refuse intervention, for that would incur Henry's ire. So he granted a dispensation commission, but drew it up in such terms that it was practically worthless. A second commission was promised by the Pope not long after (Froude, i. 144–146), and in 1528 came the event that was eventually to bring the matter to a head, the despatching of Cardinal Campeggio to England to hear the case in conjunction with Wolsey.

Campeggio was an astute Italian, specially selected

for the purpose, with secret instructions to delay matters as much as possible; to hedge and fence and trim with all ingenuity; but above all, to be sure and decide nothing definite. He played his part well. Arriving in England after multiplied delays, he plied his artifices with the skill of a juggler. But the king was not in the mood for shuffling, and the master strokes of Italian finesse were wasted on the air. As a matter of fact, Henry's temper was rising fast, and the long delays and evident temporising of the Papal legate were disgusting, alike to the monarch and the nation.

After a long while, that is, in May, 1529, Campeggio's court was really opened, and after a few illusory proceedings, was adjourned. A fortnight or so after, it was opened again, and once more adjourned. The farce was getting serious. The eyes, both of the king and the people, were being opened to the hollow unreality of the whole business. Nay, more. They were being opened to the indignity and dishonour that was being done to their ruler and realm. They were beginning to see the inconsistency of a foreign court being opened on English soil, and an English king and queen being compelled to appear thereat. "So long as a legate's court sat in London, men were able to conceal from themselves the fact of a foreign jurisdiction, and to feel that, substantially, their national independence was respected; when the fiction aspired to become a reality, but one consequence was possible" (Froude, i. 163).

And so in the strange providence of God, it came to pass, that the craft and subtilty of a scheming diplomatist became the means of precipitating the emancipation of the Church. For the end of the

Campeggio farce was the dissolution of his court, and the transfer by the Pope's order of the case to Rome, and a summons requiring Henry VIII., the invincible king of England, France, and Ireland, to appear in Rome before a Roman court.

This proceeding caused no little excitement in the nation, and became the turning point of the overthrow of Rome. The spirit of the nation was aroused thoroughly. The summoning of an English king to appear before an Italian bishop, "To bow and sue for grace with suppliant knee," was an unheard of thing. It was intolerable. Wolsey had very plainly said that the English people would die rather than submit to such an indignity. "If the advocation be passed," he wrote to his agent in Rome, Sir Gregory Cassalis, "with citation of the king in person, or by proctor to the court of Rome, the dignity and prerogative royal of the king's crown, whereunto all the nobles and subjects of this realm will adhere and stick unto the death, may not tolerate nor suffer that the same be obeyed. Nor shall it ever be seen that the king's cause shall be ventilated or decided in any place out of his own realm; *but that if his grace should come at any time to the court of Rome, he would do the same with such a main and army royal, as should be formidable to the Pope and all Italy*" (*Ibid.*, i. 164). And now it was verified. On every side the duplicity of the Pope had awakened disgust, and his effrontery in summoning the king to Rome was regarded as a national insult. The crisis at last had come. England, as far as the Pope was concerned, was in a state of mutiny.

LXVI. *What was the immediate result of the dissolution of Campeggio's court?*

The first result was the downfall of Wolsey.

Perhaps Anne Boleyn had something to do with this. It is not unlikely. But, after all, Wolsey had himself chiefly to blame. He travailed with mischief, and his travail came upon his own head. His record was very blemished, a mixture of pomp, and pride, and priestcraft; and it is little wonder that the king himself, disgusted with Rome's delays, had turned at last upon him, even though he had been so long his valuable tool, and had of late done all he possibly could to forward the great matter of the divorce. Rarely did man drop more suddenly or irretrievably. His great seal as Lord Chancellor was taken from him. A layman supplanted him in the Lord Chancellorship. His riches were snatched from him as if he were a felon. He was charged with high treason. He was threatened with the Tower. And to cap the climax of his ignominy he was actually charged as a Roman ecclesiastic with having broken the law of England in exercising the authority of Papal legate within the English realm. The last charge, unreasonable as it was from the standpoint of equity however justified by the technicalities of the letter of the law, only showed the changed temper of the king and the nation.

The downfall of Wolsey was followed by the downfall of the clergy.

As the representatives, not only of the Pope, but of God, the clergy had for ages wantoned in the insolence of their arrogated prerogatives. They held the keys of heaven and hell. Their chief was the greatest earthly sovereign; his territory, the greatest earthly empire. Their cardinals were like princes of the royal blood; their bishops, the greatest nobles in the land. They were the first estate in the

representative system of the nation (Stubbs' "Constitutional History," ii. 176). They were to all intents and purposes the supreme power in the realm.

But at last their long day was coming to an end. The shepherds, who so long had fed themselves, but not the flocks; who neglected the sheep, and with force and with cruelty ruled them; were now themselves to be fed with judgment.

The first blow came in the great Parliament of 1529, known as the reformed or Reformation Parliament. After a speech by the new Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, the proceedings began with a formal act of accusation against the clergy, in which the enactments of the clergy in convocation, and the methods of their enforcement were unsparingly impeached; the abuses of their courts and powers denounced; and their unjust methods of accusing and trying heretics exposed in most scathing terms. Three bills were then passed, all of them humiliating to the clerical order, the last of which, whilst aimed primarily at the English clergy, was really a cut at Rome's power in England. It appears to have been quite a common thing for a priest, instead of attending to his clerical duties, to buy and sell merchandise, to keep a tannery or a brewery, and in virtue of a license from Rome, to hold as many as eight or nine benefices. The statute against pluralities stopped all this; regulated the holding of benefices, forbade secular employments, and declared dispensations from the court of Rome to be penal.

In many respects this Act was one of the most remarkable ever passed in England. Its passage fifty years before would have been incredible. It showed that a remarkable change was coming over the lay

mind of England, and that the people had at last, to the horror of a moribund caste, put their hand to the plough of ecclesiastical reform. Before this time, for a body of laymen to dictate their duties to a body of clergymen was a thing almost unheard of. It is a question whether those historians have caught the true interpretation of the motives of the reform Parliament of 1529, who ascribe its zeal to love of office and complete subserviency to the will of the king. The truth seems rather to lie in the fact that, for the first time in the history of England, the spirit of the people has found an expression in the representatives of the people, and that the laity of England, with a sternness of temper that revealed the intensity of their convictions, had awakened to the peril of ecclesiastical abuses. After no little opposition from the bishops the bill became law.

A bitterer blow was to follow.

The Parliament had taught the clergy a lesson on the frailty of human greatness. The king now taught them another.

As was said before, the technical charge by which Wolsey was mainly impeached was his breaking the Statute of Præmunire, a charge that was palpably unjust, as the statute was practically a dead letter, and the king himself had winked at its contravention. But now, with an unparalleled audacity, the king determined to bring down the whole body of the clergy by declaring them also guilty of breaking the Præmunire Statute, inasmuch as all the clergy had recognised Wolsey in his capacity as Papal Legate, and therefore had indirectly contravened the law. In December, 1530, an official notice was sent to the clergy that they were one and all to be prosecuted,

and that their only escape lay in the payment of an enormous fine.

The third and greatest result of the divorce question was the downfall of the Pope.

The downfall of the clergy was followed by the downfall of the Pope. If there was any doubt before as to the tendency of the drift of events, there could be none now. For these acts of the king and his Parliament were only secondarily insulting to the clergy of England. Primarily and supremely they were insulting to Rome. Apparently they were struck at a body of Englishmen. Really they fell on the Italian Pope. Every device of the Parliament and the king for lowering the prestige of the clergy was a death blow to the Papal supremacy.

The condemnation of a Cardinal of Rome by the secular court of an insular kingdom was the assertion of the revolutionising proposition that the State was superior to the Church, and that the Pope of Rome was no more in England than any other outside prince or bishop. The subjection of the clergy to the Præmunire Statute was the re-assertion of the long-fought-for principle of the English constitution, that the clergy, though Roman clergy, were to recognise the regal power of the Crown, and were to be amenable to the jurisdiction of the State. The proclamation forbidding the introduction of Papal bulls into England, and the prohibition of dealings with the court of Rome on the part of Englishmen was practically a declaration of independence of Rome. And the determination of the king to act upon Cranmer's advice, and not only hold a court *in England* to settle the matter of the divorce, but actually to gather the opinion of representative uni-

versity men and to deprive the Pope thereby of his monopoly of final appeal and supreme decision in a matter of such serious import to the welfare of Christendom, marked one of the most revolutionary proceedings from the Roman standpoint that had ever been attempted by a devoted Romanist. It was, in fact, a displacement of the Pope from the throne of ecclesiastical dictatorship.

Thus, step by step and stage by stage, the unconscious emancipator of the English Church was slowly moving forward, led as a blind man by a way that he knew not, to the forwarding of events that he could not have known.

Yet a caution must needs be inserted at this point.

We must not mistake Henry's position. Henry VIII. was no anti-Roman zealot, actuated by the spirit of a fervent Protestantism for the demolition of the Roman fabric. At this time his over-mastering desire was the accomplishment of his divorce. The humiliation of Rome was a mere accident in its accomplishment. He was no anti-Papal champion, inspired with a determination to bring down to the ground the Roman Edom. Nothing of the sort. He was only an Englishman, and he was a king. But he was a king of violent caprice and imperious impulse. And he was determined, with the masterful instinct of his race, to be no inferior of the time-serving Italian called a Pope, who was but a puppet in the hands of the foes of England, moved now by Germany and now by France. To the clergy, as a spiritual body, Henry VIII. had no repugnance, nor did he contemplate such a thing as indignity to their ecclesiastical office. But he must be *aut Cæsar aut nullus* in his own dominions, and he would not tolerate ultra-

montanism. No man can serve two masters. They must either obey the king or the Pope. He would have no conspirators in his realm, and a body of men who were bound body and soul to an Italian allegiance must be coerced into submission, though the act of compulsion involved the demolition of the Papal supremacy.

LXVII. *What were the various steps by which the separation of England from Rome was formally brought about?*

The story is a long one, and in every step the over-ruling providence of God is clearly shown. As briefly as possible, however, the various stages in their order will be unfolded. The first thing was the declaration of the king's supremacy over the Church, which was in effect the renunciation of the supremacy of the Pope, on the part of the Convocations of York and Canterbury, in February and May, 1531. After much discussion and great resistance, both houses of Convocation, with undisguised reluctance, acknowledged that the king was rightfully, as head of the realm, the supreme head of the Church as far as is permitted by the law of Christ.

This was really a momentous national revolution, and the most daring thing yet attempted in England.

For it must be remembered that all the clergy at this time, in heart and soul, were Roman Catholics. They had been trained from childhood to believe in the Pope as the successor of Peter, and the vicegerent of God in earth. Yet in the strange providence of God, in spite of, if not against, this instinct and conviction, they were led by what was largely the fear of a man, and the dread of losing their ecclesiastical status and worldly goods, to sullenly yet formally

repudiate the headship of the long recognised head of Christendom, and acknowledge the headship of such a tyrant as King Henry the Eighth. An idea of the tremendous change this must have been is gained from a comparison of the oath that they had formally to make to the Pope, and the oath which they were hereafter to take to the king. The oath of the English clergy to the Pope was as follows:—

"I, John, bishop or abbot of A., from this hour forward, shall be faithful and obedient to St. Peter, and *to the holy Church of Rome*, and to *my lord the Pope*, and his successors canonically elected. I shall not be of counsel or consent that they shall lose either life or member, or shall be taken or suffer any violence, or any wrong by any means. Their counsel confided to me by them, their messages or letters, I shall not willingly discover to any person. *The Popedom of Rome*, the rules of the holy fathers, and regalities of St. Peter, I *shall help and maintain and defend* against all men. The legate of the See apostolic, going and coming, I shall honourably treat. The rights, honours, privileges, *authorities of the Church of Rome*, and of the Pope and his successors, I shall cause to be conserved, defended, augmented, and promoted. I shall not be in counsel, treaty, or any act, in which anything shall be imagined against him or the Church of Rome, their rights, seats, honours, or powers; and if I know any such to be moved or compassed, I shall resist it to my power, and as soon as I can, I shall advertise him, or such as may give him knowledge. The rules of the holy fathers, the decrees, ordinances, sentences, dispositions, reservations, provisions, and commandments apostolic, to my power I shall keep, and cause to be kept by others.

"*Heretics, schismatics, and rebels* to our holy father and his successors, I shall resist and persecute to my power. I shall come to the synod when I am called, except I be letted by a canonical impediment. The thresholds of the apostles I shall visit yearly, personally, or by my deputy. I shall not alienate or sell my possessions without the Pope's council. So God me help, and the holy evangelists."

This oath of the clergymen, which they were wont to make to the Bishop of Rome, was abolished by statute, and a new oath ministered, wherein they acknowledged the king to be the supreme head under Christ in the Church of England, in these words:—

"I, John, B. of A., utterly renounce and clearly forsake, all such clauses, words, sentences, and grants which I have, or shall have hereafter, of the Pope's holiness, of and for the bishopric of A., that in any wise hath been, is, or hereafter may be, hurtful or prejudicial to your highness, your heirs, successors, dignity, privilege, or estate royal; and also I do swear that I shall be faithful and true, and faith and truth I shall bear to you, my sovereign lord, and to your heirs, kings of the same, of life and limb, and earthly worship above all creatures, to live and die with you and yours, against all people; and diligently I shall be attendant to all your needs and business, after my wit and power; and your counsel I shall keep and hold, acknowledging myself to hold my bishopric of you only; beseeching you for restitution of the temporalities of the same: promising (as before) that I shall be a faithful, true, and obedient subject unto your said highness, heirs, and successor during my life; and the services and other things due

to your highness, for the restitution of the temporalities of the same bishopric, I shall truly do, and obediently perform. So God help me and all saints" (Fox, viii.).

Thus was the usurped headship of the Pope renounced, and the king reputed the only supreme head on earth—that is, next under Christ who is in heaven—of the Church that once more now in a true sense is entitled to be called, Anglicana Ecclesia, the Church of England. The clergy even seem at this time to have caught the rising spirit of Protestantism. Whether it was a mere swimming with the tide of royal favour, or a selfish desire to profit by the times, or a real growth of a patriotic and enlightened conviction that was the cause of their action it would be hard to tell. But at any rate their action was remarkably Protestant when we consider their previous record. They presented a significant address to the Crown. They asked the king to abolish annates, or payments made by bishops to the Pope for the privilege of being consecrated as bishops of the Church of England, and added, in case the Pope objected, this remarkable petition:—

"Forasmuch as St. Paul willeth us to withdraw ourselves from all such as walk disorderly, it may please the king's most noble majesty to ordain that the obedience of him and his people be withdrawn from the See of Rome" (Perry, ii. 79). It was, when we consider the time, a most extraordinary appeal.

The consequence was that an Act to this effect was soon brought into the House of Lords, providing for the cessation of the payments of annates to the Pope, and the lawfulness of the consecration of the bishops

without the Pope's bulls, and the ministry of the clergy of the Church, notwithstanding Papal excommunication or interdiction. This statute must be regarded as an epoch in the Protestantism of England. It may rightly be described as the first Act of Parliament of King Henry VIII.'s reign which was distinctly anti-papal.

The next step was the very remarkable Act known as the statute for the restraint of appeals. It peremptorily prohibited all kinds of appeals to Rome. The language of the Act seems almost incredible when it is remembered that it was passed in the year 1533. It declared:—

"That the Crown of England was imperial, and the realm a compact body politic, with plenary power, prerogative, and jurisdiction, to render justice in all causes, spiritual and temporal, to all subjects within the kingdom, *without restraint by an appeal to any foreign power;* the body spiritual thereof having power, when any cause of the law divine or of spiritual learning happened to come in question, to declare and interpret by that part of the body politic called the spirituality, *now being* usually called the English Church, and that there had always been in the spirituality men of sufficiency and integrity to declare and determine all doubts within the kingdom, without the intermeddling of any external power, and that several kings, as Edward I., Edward III., Richard II., Henry IV., had by several laws preserved the liberties of the *realm,* both spiritual and temporal, from the interference of Rome; yet, that many inconveniences had arisen by appeals to the See of Rome in causes of matrimony and others, which delayed and deputed justice. Wherefore, it was enacted that all such

causes, whether relative to the king or any of his subjects, were to be determined *within the kingdom* in the several Courts to which they belonged, notwithstanding any appeals to Rome, or inhibitions or bulls *from Rome*" (*Ibid.*, 80).*

This act for the restraint of appeals was the climax. By it the English Church and nation passed the Rubicon, and the break with the Pope was finally and formally completed.

About the same time the Convocation decided by its vote the legality of the divorce, and Cranmer as Archbishop declared the marriage with Catherine to be unlawful and void. The words of the sentence of his interesting decree are given at length by Froude ("Hist.," i. 456, 457). From the Papal standpoint it was also most audacious, and was received not only by the nation, but even by the king, with uneasiness and misgivings.

The king had already been married for some time to Anne Boleyn. Thus by coinciding circumstances the rupture with Rome was consummated beyond remedy, and the nation of England and the Church of England together were finally and irrevocably separated from Roman jurisdiction. Bishops were ordered to preach that the Pope was not to be accounted head of the Church. The University of Cambridge declared against the usurped headship of the Pope. Even Bishop Gardiner published a book confuting the Papal authority.

True, the final act of rupture was almost stayed. For at the very last moment the King of France

* The reader's attention is called to the words that I have italicized. They seem to bear out the argument of Chapter XI.

appeared as mediator, and induced Henry to agree to the compromise that if the Pope would permit a rehearing of the divorce case, he would postpone if not abandon his measures for separation from Rome. The Pope on his part agreed to this, and promised that if a courier arrived before the 23rd March, 1534, the sentence of excommunication would not be pronounced.

The fate of England and the cause of Protestantism in the Church and nation hung suspended upon such a trivial event as the journey of a courier.

Again the working of the mysterious hand of God in Providence became manifest. The courier was dispatched from England, but *happened* to be delayed till two days too late. The Bull of Excommunication was promulgated by the exasperated Pope, and England and Rome were sundered by mutual renunciation. The Pope has cast off England. England has cast off the Pope. England and the Church of England are henceforth independent of Rome.

The Church was far from being reformed. The reformation was not by any means accomplished. By far the greatest and mightiest work remained yet to be performed. But as when the dead man Lazarus lay in his grave, the stone had to be rolled away before the revived man could come forth, so before the Church of England could come forth into newness of life as a revived and reformed body, the incubus of the Papal usurpation had to be removed. "Take ye away the stone," was the Master's first command; and after that He said, "loose him and let him go." Henry VIII. was only an instrument in the hand of God to take away the stone of the Papal supremacy. The real reformation was the reviving and loosing and

letting go the Church by the adoption of the truth; the work of the Word of God and the Spirit of God through the great reformers. In the following chapter, therefore, we shall turn aside from the course of political and international events to dwell upon the persons and incidents that figure most prominently in the initial stages of this greater movement.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BEGINNERS OF THE SPIRITUAL REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Quiet work going on behind the scenes—The real forces of the Reformation not political—The Reformation due to the spiritual enlightenment of individual churchmen—The Reformation movement in England not foreign—The doctrine of the Reformers taught by God's Word and Spirit—The work of Thomas Bilney—His conversion typical of the conversion of the Church—Its far-reaching effects upon the Church—Was the means of the conversion of Latimer—The conversion of Latimer another epoch in the Reformation—Further fruits of Bilney's work—The work of William Tyndale—He perceives reformation impossible without Bible translation—His great resolution—The difficulties he had to encounter—The Bible in the vernacular the foe of the Church—Great demands for Tyndale's Testaments—His imprisonment and death—The greatness of his work and influence.

WHILE these great international events were occupying the minds of the leaders and the masses of the English people, and kings, and Popes, and legates, and Cardinals, seemed the only actors upon the Church-world theatre, a quiet but important movement was going on behind the scenes, and the men and things which were to be more signally used by God in the work of reforming the Church of England than the great and the mighty ones of the world, were quietly doing their appointed work.

The real forces of the Reformation were not political or ecclesiastical. They were spiritual. The most important of the anticipatory movements of Anglican reform was neither regal nor convocational. It was private and personal. The Reformation of the Church

of England in its true and essential character was due neither to Henry VIII. nor Convocation ; it was due to the spiritual enlightenment of individual churchmen. Outward and political movements in State and Church were talked of by all, and seemed to be everything ; but they were only the minor part. The real reformation was the conversion of the Church. The conversion of the Church was due to the conversion of her reformers. The conversion of the reformers was effected by the Spirit of God through the Holy Scripture. And the conversion of one of the most influential of the reforming agents was largely due to the conversion of one English Churchman who was martyred as a heretic.

The same forces which inaugurated the primitive Church, the Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures, inaugurated the movement in England, which was essentially a revival of primitive Christianity. The Holy Spirit gave the Word. The entrance of the Word gave light to men. Enlightened men spread the Word to others. The Spirit through these men revived the Church. Thus the greatest reforming force in the Reformation of the Anglican Church was the Holy Bible, illuminating through the Holy Spirit the lives of influential churchmen, who in due course so spread the truth, that in time the whole Church was leavened, and the views which they taught became the Church's formulated teaching.

It is of the first importance, also, for the student of English Church history to understand that the origin of this movement was native, not foreign. It sprang from within, not from without. It was not German, it was not Bohemian, it was not Swiss ; it was English. It was begun by Englishmen, and arose

not so much from contact with foreign reformers as from contact with the Word of God. Wycliffe was an Englishman, and the Scriptural and spiritual views that he held, he held as an Englishman, and an English Churchman. The early followers of Wycliffe were Englishmen, and though their teaching for a time lost influence, yet, as a stream that for a time goes underground and appears again, their work was fruitful after many days. Tyndale was an Englishman. Bilney was an Englishman. Frith was an Englishman. The views that they held and taught were native and unimported. They were neither caught from Luther nor Zwinglius; they were taken direct by the teaching of the Holy Spirit from the Word of God. Christ was their Master; not a German or a Swiss divine. And the influence and teaching of these men, these Englishmen, was the most potent force in the careers and characters of the great Anglican reformers, who in their turn came to hold their views with the conviction and clearness that springs from direct contact with the Word of God, and the personal illumination of the Spirit. All of the men whom we are about to refer to, as well as Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer, confessed that their doctrine and teachings were the result of the light of the Holy Word and the illuminating of the Holy Spirit. It may safely be said that Cranmer, and Ridley, and Latimer were more influenced by the New Testament than by all the teachings of all the continental divines. Nay more, it can be even asserted that they received more light from a comparatively unknown English Church reformer, than from even the illustrious Luther or the famous Zwinglius and Calvin. English Churchmen must beware

of giving honour to those to whom it is not due. The honour on the spiritual side of the Anglican Reformation is due under God to Englishmen, not to foreigners.*

The man in England who was destined to play a very great part in this preparatory reformation movement was Thomas Bilney. A brief account of this comparatively obscure apostle of the principles of the Reformation will do more to explain the reason and meaning of the present position of the Church than a volume upon the divorce case and Henry VIII. Bilney was not only a very strong factor in the ultimate reformation of the English Church; he exemplified in his personal career the forces that accomplished it. His story was a parable of the transformation of the Church.

Thomas Bilney was a student at the University of Cambridge at the time when Erasmus' New Testament was first published. This was in the year 1516. Fox says that he was a man of ability and wide reading. For some time he appears to have been anxious about his soul, seeking peace and finding none. The account of his finding light and peace in Christ is so remarkable that it will be worth while to tell it in his own language. He begins by telling how he spent all that he had, like the woman in the gospel, on ignorant physicians, who appointed him to perform watchings and fastings, and directed him to purchase pardons and masses.

"But at last I heard speak of Jesus, even then when

* Of course the reader is reminded that there is no desire here to disparage the obvious historical fact of the mutual action and reaction of religious opinions in this uniquely transitorial age. The point is that there was a distinctly Anglican movement of reform.

the New Testament was first set forth by Erasmus; which when I understood to be eloquently done by him, being allured rather by the Latin than by the Word of God (for at that time I knew not what it meant), I bought it even by the Providence of God, as I do now well understand and perceive; and, at the first reading (as I well remember), I chanced upon this sentence of St. Paul (O most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul!) in 1 Tim. i. 15: 'It is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief and principal.' This one sentence, through God's instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, and being almost in despair, that even immediately I seemed unto myself inwardly to feel a marvellous comfort and quietness, insomuch that 'my bruised bones leaped for joy.'"

After that the Scriptures became sweeter to Bilney than honey and the honeycomb. He learned that all his endeavours, fastings, watchings, and all the pardons and masses he had bought, were of no avail. As St. Augustine says, they were but a hasty running out of the right way. Having begun to taste the sweetness of this instruction, which no one can discern unless taught of God, who revealed it to the Apostle Peter, he entreated the Lord that he would increase his faith, that with the power of the Holy Spirit, given from above, he might teach others the ways of God. In one word, Thomas Bilney was born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth. The Father, of His own will, begat him with the

word of truth through the power of the Holy Ghost.

The conversion of Thomas Bilney was remarkable for two reasons.

In the first place, it was an evidence of the transforming power of the Word of God, and an illustration of the part played by the Bible in the regeneration of the Church of England. The Word of God, pure and simple, was used by the Holy Spirit to awaken him to newness of life. The Romish system was powerless to effect what was wrought by a simple text of God's book. The reformation of England's Church was likewise an awakening of a great ecclesiastical body to newness of life through the immediate influence of God's Word, printed, published, preached, and read. The sixth article of the Church is the Church's tribute to the power by which, under God, it was reformed. Trace to their fountain-head the various streams of light and life that ran through English history in the reigns of Henry the Eighth and Edward VI., and they will be found to converge in the Book which that little band of scholars in Oxford and Cambridge were beginning at this time reverently to study, and an English scholar was preparing presently to publish. The work of Tyndale had its foundation in the reading of the New Testament. So had the work of Frith. So had the work of Stafford. So had the work of Barnes. So had the work of Latimer, and Ridley, and Cranmer, and Hooper. So had the reformation of the English Church. God's Word was the true cause of the English Reformation. It was the understanding of Scripture, the discovery of the teaching and meaning of Scripture,

that explains the change that came over the Church of England.

The Church of England, for two or three centuries before the sixteenth century, knew little of, and cared less for, the Holy Scriptures. It dishonoured them. It despised them. It persecuted the readers of them. But when the Word was read and understood, a great light arose. Error was seen as error, and truth as truth. The way of salvation was perceived, and its simple beauty received as a revelation. At first this was confined to individuals, who rejoiced in the light, and spread it; the Church to which they belonged, the Church of England, repressing and restricting the Word in every possible way. But by-and-by the *Church itself* was awakened. The Bible became its chiefest treasure. All that it taught was truth, however opposed to tradition and authority. All that it taught not was error, however supported by the leaders of Catholic Christendom. The saying of the Saviour's became true of the Church of England: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

In other words, the apprehension of the Word of God was followed by the same effect in the case of the Church as it was in the case of Bilney, and Tyndale, and Latimer. The Church was awakened, emancipated, transformed, acknowledging as its supreme and exclusive authority the Holy Scriptures.

In the second place, the conversion of Bilney was remarkable for the fact that it became, by reason of its far-reaching influence, one of the important events in the history of the Church of England in the sixteenth century. For, from the conversion of this man sprang, directly and indirectly, the conversion of

the men who were to mould the age; those prominent reformers to whom the reconstruction of the Church of England was chiefly due, and whose work was mainly what it was, because of their spiritual enlightenment. Who could possibly have foreseen on the day when the curious Cambridge scholar took up with careless hands the New Testament of Erasmus, that that perusal was to result in a series of conversions without parallel, perhaps, in the history of any age; and that that simple reading was to give a new current to a life that in its turn should revolutionize characters whose formative influence on the Church and the nation should endure from generation to generation.

We will explain what we mean.

One of the first fruits of Bilney's conversion was the conversion of Latimer, afterwards Court preacher and Bishop of Worcester. Latimer was at this time a bigoted Papist, violently opposed to the reforming opinions, and one of the champions of Rome. "I was as obstinate a Papist as any was in England," he said, afterwards, in one of his sermons.

The story of his conversion, though often told, is worth repeating. It was about the time that he was taking his degree of Bachelor of Divinity, and he had just delivered a violent philippic against Melancthon. It was rather a playing to the gallery of the Catholic party, who were naturally elated, and the preacher was regarded on all sides as a champion of the Church against the seditious novelties of the new opinions. Amongst his hearers that day was Bilney, and a great longing arose in his heart to win that enthusiastic soul for Christ and the Gospel.

He thought that the best way would be simply to

tell him the story of his own conversion, and just explain to him how he found Christ himself. So he went into Latimer's study, and in a simple, earnest manner asked Latimer to hear his confession. Latimer did so. And then, with touching simplicity and pathos, Bilney told him how once he was restless and dissatisfied, seeking peace for his soul; how he tried in vain the many and better ways suggested to him of vigil, fast, and pilgrimage; how his anguish deepened as peace seemed further and further, and how at last he found joy and peace in believing the simple Word of God. As the strange confession went on, the soul of Latimer was swept with conflicting emotions, and instead of his visitor's his own soul was laid bare. The tears of the confessor began to flow, and his heart melted. He too had long been seeking, though perhaps in ignorance, the thing that he now heard so touchingly described. The Holy Spirit was working, and when Bilney as a discreet and learned minister of God's Word brought him the benefit of absolution by the ministry of God's Holy Word through the text, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow," Latimer passed from death unto life. He was converted. He was born again, not of corruptible but of incorruptible seed, by the ministry of that earnest soul-winner.

The change in Latimer's case was momentous.

Like Saul of Tarsus he boldly came out on the truth's side. He at once confessed Christ in the University, and became an avowed companion of Bilney, and Stafford, and the little band of Cambridge reformers. "He forsook the schoolmasters and such fooleries, and became a true scholar in the true divinity, so that, whereas he was before an enemy

and a persecutor of Christ, he was now an earnest seeker after Him." Latimer, moreover, as a man of force, and influence, and zeal, became a valuable ally of the cause of reform. It was impossible for him to pass through such an experience as his conversion without determining to make known to others the secret of life. Necessity was laid upon him. "After this his winning to Christ, he was not satisfied with his own conversion only, but, like a true disciple of the blessed Samaritan, pitied the misery of others; and, therefore, he became a public preacher, and also a private instructor to the rest of his brethren within the university by the space of two years; spending his time partly in the Latin tongue amongst the learned, and partly amongst the simple people in his natural and vulgar tongue." In other words, from the time that Latimer was brought to the personal knowledge of the truth by means of Bilney, the whole of his influential life was thrown in upon the side of the principles of the Reformation. Latimer, as Strype said, was one of the first in the days of Henry VIII. to preach the Gospel in the truth and simplicity of it.

We lay stress upon this. We think it is worthy of emphasis as an event of no mean importance in English Church history. For that conversion of Latimer, arising as it did from the conversion of Bilney, became one of the great determining factors in the shaping of the Church in its reformation. It gave a new character to one of the men who were to give a new character to the Church. If that man had not been converted he would never have had the views he had; nor would he have been used of God as he was; nor would the form that he and his fellow-reformers impressed upon

the Church have been assumed. But by the grace of God he was brought to a personal knowledge of the power of God's Holy Word, the way of salvation, and justification by faith, and the other great doctrines of the Gospel. By the grace of God also he was the means of bringing others to the same convictions, and they in their turn by reason of their influence, were enabled to hand these great truths on to the future ages as the accepted and authoritative teaching of the Church of England.

But Latimer was not the only one that was brought to the knowledge of the truth by Bilney. He was the means also of bringing Barnes, prior and master of the house of the Augustines, a learned man, and like Apollos mighty in the Scriptures. "Yet did he not see his inward and outward idolatry, till that good master Bilney converted him wholly to Christ," after which he laboured with great earnestness for the Gospel, and in spite of his famous recantations and indiscretions, waxed faithful at the last. Barnes was the means of awakening Coverdale, one of the great translators of the Bible, and a foremost bishop of the Church in the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth. Another fruit of Bilney's earnestness was Thomas Arthur, a scholar of St. John's College. Indirectly too he influenced John Frith, whose views on the Holy Communion were those which are now taught by the Church of England, a man who is said also by Froude to have been one of the means of influencing Cranmer.

But this was not all.

The seed that grows into an oak, produces in turn the seeds of other oaks, each tree containing a thousand seeds, each seed the germ of a thousand

trees. John the Baptist brought Andrew to Christ. Andrew found his brother and brought him to Christ. And Peter in turn became the winner of thousands, and a founder of the Church. So Bilney brought Latimer to Christ; and Latimer in turn influenced Ridley, who was greatly impressed by his preaching, and acknowledged his obligations to him; and Ridley was the foremost means of opening the eyes of Cranmer (Cranmer, I. xix., Park. Soc.); and Latimer, and Ridley, and Cranmer were God's appointed instruments for the reconstruction of the Church in its doctrinal system. Bilney, Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer; it is the pedigree of the Reformation. How many more were led to the truth by the faithful preaching of Latimer will never be known on earth. But the number was great. Among others Latimer led Becon to Christ, one of the foremost doctors of the age, and Bradford also, one of the noblest of the martyrs; men who being dead even yet speak, and turn men heavenwards both by their example and writings.

Such was the work of that earnest and loving soul, "whose name," as an old High Church writer says, "will ever be held in deserved reverence by English Churchmen," and the monument of whose conversion is the transformed national Church. Though, like brave Latimer, Bilney recanted, not once but twice, he played the man at the last and was burnt as a martyr, suffering like his Master without the gate.*

* It is difficult sometimes to acquit certain party church writers of unfairness in their treatment of men like Bilney. The author of the "Ecclesia Anglicana," for instance, curtly dismisses Bilney's life and work with the words: "Bilney, a gloomy and half-crazed Puritan whom Wolsey had persuaded to recant, disowned his recantation and began preaching against *the Church system* (*sic*) in Norfolk. He was burnt in the market-place of Norwich in 1531"!!

Another man whose work was one of the formative forces quietly but potently operative in the preliminary stages of the reformation of the Church of England was William Tyndale.

He was truly, as one of his biographers says, one of the chief instruments in the blessed work of restoring the knowledge of the way of salvation to England. In fact, it is almost impossible for the student to understand the revolutionary change that came over the Church of England in the sixteenth century, without some knowledge of the influence of his labours on the minds of a great multitude of the laity of England, and many of the clergy. The personal work of Bilney; the public work of Latimer; the publishing work of Tyndale, were three great spiritual forces preparing the body corporate of the Church of England for its greatest epoch. But the greatest of these was the work of Tyndale.

To William Tyndale the English Church owes mainly the English Bible. Born of a good English family about 1484, Tyndale began at an early age his studies at Oxford, in which University he continued for some time. He was particularly proficient in languages, and was known in Magdalen College as a diligent student of Scripture. His devotion to Scripture was the keynote of his life. He loved the Word of God with a singular affection. He was saturated with the spirit of the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm. The entrance of God's Word gave him light, and the study of God's Word was his life.

He afterwards left Oxford and went to Cambridge, attracted there probably by Erasmus' Lectures, and then stopped for a while in the country house of

Sir John Walsh, a Gloucestershire squire. While a guest in this house he came into contact with many of the local churchmen of prominence, abbots, deans, archdeacons, and doctors, to whom he clearly set forth that cardinal principle of the English Church since the Reformation, that whatever is not in the Holy Scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith. The result was that he had to appear before Dr. Parker, the Chancellor of the Diocese of Worcester. Not long after this he uttered in the presence of a Roman Catholic divine who had said that England would be better without God's laws than the Pope's, his famous sentence: "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost."

Thus slowly but firmly the great revolution of his life became definitely framed in his mind, the resolve to give the people of England the Word of God in their own tongue. He saw clearly that this was the only hope of England, and that without it, any real reformation was impossible. Wycliffe had, indeed, translated the Bible; but it had never reached the people. In the first place it was not printed, and therefore was obtainable only by a few; in the second place it was in very early English, and many of its phrases were already obsolete, and unintelligible to the masses. Tyndale determined that everybody in England should be brought at once to the fountain of truth by a translation of the Bible that would be correct, intelligible, and printed for the masses of the people.

"I perceived, he said in his preface to the Penta-

teuch, how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scripture, was plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text; for else whatsoever truth is taught them, these enemies of all truth quench it again. As long as they keep that down they will so darken the right way with the mist of their sophistry" (Tyndale's Works, i. 393, 394; Park. Soc.).

The difficulties he had to encounter were enormous.

First of all, he was driven sadly but surely to the conclusion that the work could not be done in England. "I understood at the last, not only that there was no room in my Lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England." The enmity of Holy Church to the Word of God was incredible. In 1524 Tyndale left England, and never saw her shores again. He went to Hamburg, and there, in that German town in the midst of foreigners, was printed the first portion of God's Holy Word that was ever printed in the English language. That portion was the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and not long after, the whole Testament was translated, and printed in English.

This New Testament was substantially the one now familiar to English people, and in spite of the misrepresentations of Romanists in that day and this, was the most accurate and satisfactory translation of the Word of God that had been yet completed. It was not a mere second-hand translation of Luther's Testament as the Roman Catholic Cochlæus persuaded Henry VIII. and More and Fisher, and half England to believe (*Ibid.*, xxviii.–

xxxi.); nor was it, as certain modern Church writers have carelessly asserted, a mere translation to suit his own particular views (Hore, p. 252). "I call God to record," he said in that noble letter of his to Frith, which Fox gives in full; "I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus to give a reckoning of our doings, *that I never altered one syllable of God's Word* against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches might be given me."

The next difficulty was to get it into England. He had got it into print; he had now to get it into the reader's hand. This difficulty was overcome by the enterprise and zeal of certain English merchants and friends of Tyndale, who brought the precious volumes over in bales of merchandise, Tyndale having prepared at Worms a new version *which contained nothing but the inspired text,* and a brief address in the appendix to the reader. It was imported in great numbers, and eagerly bought by the people.

Another difficulty had now to be faced.

Under a mistaken notion that the New Testament which was now being so industriously circulated amongst his subjects was a kind of Lutheran production for the advancement of heresy, the king came out with a very strong manifesto against it, ordering all copies to be burned, and all holders and readers thereof to be punished.

The Church authorities were equally inimical. On the 11th of February, 1526, Cardinal Wolsey and thirty-six bishops with great display burnt baskets full of the Testaments and other books at St. Paul's. Bishop Tonstal, in a charge to his

archdeacons, most violently denounced Tyndale's translation, and enjoined the people to deliver up *all* English translations of the New Testament under pain of excommunication, and suspicion of heresy. Warham did the same. In fact to the churchmen of that day the man who gave the lay people the Word of God in their own tongue was a supplanter of *the Church*, and the New Testament in the vernacular was the foe of the Catholic faith. To translate and print and circulate an English New Testament was even to such an intelligent churchman as the author of the "Utopia" the devil's work, and the training of simple souls for hell. It only shows how Roman the Church was. It shows also what the *so-called Catholic faith* was when the New Testament was so absolutely opposed to it.

Nor must the reader be misled by the notion that the Roman party was opposed merely to the inaccuracies and corruptions of the text, and that their opposition was dictated by a high-principled anxiety for a pure and perfect version. Nothing of the sort. Out of the large body of the bishops and prelates and dignitaries of the Church, it is questionable whether one could be compared with Tyndale in critical capacity, nor was there the slightest evidence of anything like a scholarly anxiety for a high standard of vernacular translation. It was sheer antagonism to the Word of God from fear and ignorance. The Romish outcry about mutilations and corruptions, as Fulke shows in his masterly defence of the translations of the Bible, was "a wilful and impudent slander."*

* Fulke's "Defence of Translations of the Bible." The Cambridge University Press, for the Parker Society.

The idea of a body of men who had swallowed the Vulgate with its eight thousand errors, to say nothing of the missals and legends, becoming all at once so scrupulous about textual exactitude, was humorous to a degree. They knew little and cared less about matters that required a degree of accurate scholarship far beyond that possessed by the average bishop; but they hated the Bible, and determined to keep it out of the people's hands.

As Tyndale said; if they had only taken as much trouble in translating the Scriptures as they had to tear in pieces his version, they would have completed the greater part of the Bible. The very men who in times past knew no more about the Scriptures than the sentences of it which they found in the works of Duns Scotus, looked so narrowly on his translation, and scrutinised it so closely that if there was one i which had not the dot over it, they noted it and numbered it to the ignorant people for a heresy. Or as Latimer, with his shrewd common sense, put it in his letter to Hubbardine: "You say that you condemn not the Scripture, but Tyndale's translation. Therein ye show yourself contrary to your words; for ye have condemned it in all other common tongues, wherein they be approved in other countries. So that it is plain that it is the Scripture, and not the translation that ye bark against, calling it *new learning*. And this much for the first lie" (Latimer's "Remains," p. 320).

Tyndale not only had to face the vigilant opposition of king and cardinal at home; it pursued him even to the Continent. The king had his agents in the Netherlands and Germany, who were commissioned to take measures to destroy all the English

Testaments they could discover, and do all in their power to prevent their exportation. In 1529 a treaty was signed between Henry VIII. and the Princess Regent of the Netherlands, by which the contracting parties bound themselves, among other things, to prohibit the *printing* or selling of any Lutheran books, under which head, as an anti-Romanist production, the New Testament of Tyndale would be classed.

In spite of all this, the Testaments flowed in continually, and in 1534 the demand for them in England was so great that the Antwerp printers undertook themselves to print four editions of them. A circumstance occurred in connection with this enterprise that caused Tyndale no little annoyance. One of these printers employed one George Toye, who surreptitiously brought out an edition that was very inaccurate indeed, and calculated to do Tyndale much harm. Fortunately Tyndale discovered the transaction, and exposed Toye openly. But it only shows what vexatious hindrances beset him, and what obstacles he had to overcome.

The end of Tyndale's noble career was tragic in the extreme. For some time unavailing efforts had been made to induce Tyndale to return to England. He felt very keenly his exile from his native country, and the bitter absence from his friends. But he knew perfectly well that his life would not be safe there, and his work would be impossible. So he kept on working with unwearying diligence at his translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew, moving, in the meanwhile, from place to place to elude the agents of the king, who were bent upon his arrest. In 1535 he found his way to Antwerp, and there it was, while being hospitably entertained

in the house of an English merchant, that he was basely betrayed by one of the king's agents, named Philips, and carried to the Castle of Vilford, eighteen miles from Antwerp, where he was imprisoned, Bishop Gardiner seemingly having a hand in the matter. For over twelve months he was immured in Vilvorden Castle, where he pursued, with zeal, his Old Testament translation, and carried on a stout controversy with the Romanist doctors of Louvaine. Tyndale was then condemned as a heretic, and sentenced to death. "He was tied to the stake; and then strangled first by the hangman, and afterwards with fire consumed, on the 6th of October, 1536; crying thus at the stake, with a fervent zeal, and a loud voice, 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes!'"

It was a glorious ending to a glorious life, and speedy and marvellous was the answer to the dying martyr's prayer. Before that very year had closed, in which a body of foreign Romanists, at the instigation of an English Romanist, had burned an Englishman for translating into English the Holy Scripture, "the first volume of Holy Scripture ever printed on English ground came forth from *the press of the king's own printer.*" And more marvellous to say, that translation of the New Testament was not only authorised by the king, the foremost and most powerful of the opponents of Tyndale's New Testaments; *it was Tyndale's own version* of the *Testament*, with his prologues also, which were a beautiful introduction to the reading of the Scriptures of a most decidedly Protestant and evangelical character. And most marvellous of all, the long proscribed name of William Tyndale, the man who was burned by the Church at

Vilvorden, was openly set forth on its title-page (Tyndale's Works, Park. Soc., i. lxxv.). It was the Divine saying repeated, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

Of the subsequent publications of the Holy Scripture, and the position given to Tyndale's translations in our English Bible, we shall speak hereafter. Our object for the present is to draw attention to the silent but widespread effect of his life work, and the greatness of his influence on the hearts and thoughts of the English people. Fox says Tyndale may worthily be called an Apostle of England. In that Fox spake truly. William Tyndale did more to hasten the principles of the Reformation, and to make the Church of England what it is to-day than many churchmen are wont to imagine.

It was not merely that he recognised the right of the lay people to have the Scripture in their mother tongue, but that he was the first of Englishmen to make this privilege an accomplished fact. At the time when the craving for knowledge was growing daily, he stepped forward and gave to the laity of England the New Testament in English. He became one of the most effectual pioneers of the right of private judgment. When the minds of English churchmen were wearying of Rome, he led them to God's Word, and gave to the nation an authority more surely infallible than that of the apostate successors of Peter. By his advocacy of Scripture-reading, he struck Wycliffe's key-note of Church reform. By his most practical enunciation of the principle of the sixth Article, he prepared the subsoil of England for the changes inaugurated by Henry and Cromwell, and

consummated by Cranmer and Ridley. In his pathway into the Holy Scripture, and his prologue, he familiarized the lay mind of England with that great foundation principle of the Reformation in England, which was afterwards formulated as the teaching of the Church in the eleventh Article.

While then the name of William Tyndale, like that of Thomas Bilney, may not have been mentioned by many authors as one of the great and prominent agents in the reformation of the Church of England, his work is not on that account to be considered the less important. God often chooses instruments that are undervalued by man, and works great works by men who do not figure largely on the theatre of fame. The names of the great, and noble, and mighty ones, the kings, and cardinals, and bishops, and archbishops of England, who played so famous a part in the Reformation, are rightly given prominence in its narration. But he will fail to grasp the true secret of this cardinal epoch in our Church history who fails to perceive the remarkable preparation of the personal agents, through the work of Bilney and Latimer, and the unmistakable evidence of God's providential hand in the raising up and sending forth at the very time his work was needed, such a modern Apollos as William Tyndale. It was his great theorem, the "laity cannot be established in the truth unless the Bible be translated for the laity," that explains the preparedness of the Church for the reform of Edward's reign; and it was this that was the cause of the spread, and the play, and the growth of the fountains and the rivers of the water of life, which he sent flowing through so many channels in England. To this also may be ascribed the great-

ness of the change that came over its doctrine. The Bible and the Bible only may be said to have been the religion of Tyndale; and it was in no small measure owing to him that the Bible and the Bible only, as the supreme and final authority, became the doctrine of the Church of England (Art. vi.).

CHAPTER XVI.

THE INCIPIENT PROTESTANTIZING OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The separation from Rome the act of the Church and the realm of England—The name Protestant secondary—The thing is of primary importance—The Church of England still Roman in doctrine—No thought of separation from Roman Catholic unity—Yet it was separated; in Roman Catholic view, schism—The case of John Frith—English Church now holds as truth what it formerly condemned as heresy—Yet the Church the same Church—The Church was reformed then, not instituted—Romanists have no claim to Church temporalities—Initial steps of Church reform by Henry — Anti-papal movements — Injunctions to preachers—The Primer—The whole Bible in English published by authority—The remarkable events accounting for this.

WE now resume the thread of historical events connected with the rejection of the Papacy. By a series of revolutionary events, which followed one another with startling suddenness, the most Ultramontane of all the national sections of the Roman communion has rejected the claims of the Pope, and pronounced his authority a usurpation.

The stone of the Roman supremacy has been rolled away. The first part of the work of Protestantizing the Church is accomplished. Both the realm of England and the Church of England are separated from Rome. The temporal headship of the Pope of Rome is repudiated, and his spiritual supremacy renounced. The Church of England has taken a stand as a Protestant Church that a decade before would have been considered impossible. And this suggests a

question that it will be necessary to answer before we go further. The question is this:—

LXVIII. *Could this separation of England from the Pope in the year* 1534 *be taken in any sense as an indication of the Protestantism of the Church?*

If we rise above mere verbal sophisms, and consider the subject without prejudice or perversion, the answer to this question must be given in the affirmative. In a really true sense, it certainly could. For the first time in the history of England, the Church of England, *as a Church*, may now be said to have become Protestant; for, as Canon Perry says, at the close of 1534, the Papal power, so long intrusively dominant in England, had been legally repudiated *by the constitutional acts of both clergy and laity* ("Eng. Ch. Hist.," ii. p. 86). True, it was an incipient and partial Protestantism, of a very rudimentary and imperfect type; it was as different from the Protestantism of Ridley and Latimer as the doctrine of the Thirty-nine Articles from the teaching of the Articles of 1536. But the protest against the jurisdiction of the Pope and the renunciation of his authority was an act of Convocation, which represented the *Church*, as well as of the king and the Parliament, which represented the *nation;* and this revolt from Rome's long-suffered domination of the Church, was unquestionably the proclamation of the Church's Protestantism. It is true that the word Protestant, as far as England was concerned, was then an almost unknown word. It is true that as far as the expression was concerned the term Protestant applied in those days to certain German dissentients from a brief of Charles V. The name is secondary; the thing is of primary importance. Too much weight must not be given to terms. If the

thing is there it is sufficient. And in this act of the united realm of England, king, Church, and people, revolting from and renouncing the long-asserted authority of the Pope, we have the first step in the great work of God in transforming the Church of England. In other words: the partial, and individual Protestantism of Edward III., Langton, and Grosseteste against Papal rule, has become the Protestantism, not only of the realm, but of the Church of England. The Church of England, as the Church of England, puts itself on record as protesting against, or as being a Protestant against, the Pope of Rome.

LXIX. *But had this rejection of the Papal supremacy on the part of the Church of England anything to do with Popery or the doctrine of the Church? After this, was the pure Word of God preached, the Holy Communion substituted for the Mass, the Bible for tradition, and the minister of the Gospel for the Mass-priest? Did the Church become Protestant in doctrine?*

No, not in the slightest degree. There was no renunciation of Popery. The entire doctrinal system of the Church, which was in effect *Popery*, remained for the time *in statu quo*. It is of the highest importance to remember that notwithstanding this voluntary separation of the Church of England from Rome, and the extraordinary repudiation of the headship of the tenant of Peter's chair, there was not the slightest intention or idea on the part of King Henry or the clergy of altering in any essential degree the Catholic religion as held by Rome, or even of severing themselves from the unity of the Catholic Church. This may seem anomalous to the modern reader, but it is a fact. The Commons themselves took care to put on record

in the very Act of protestation against the Pope their determination not to alter any doctrine of the faith; and, as we have shown in the previous chapters, that meant of course the faith of the Church of Rome. The Roman doctrine was cherished by all save the scattered and persecuted adherents of what we would now call the principles of the Reformation. Bilney, and Tyndale, and Latimer, and the Scripturists were really the only ones in the Church who held the reformed doctrines which were soon to be incorporated as the teaching of the Church of the nation. The Churchmen of England, both lay and clerical, seemed to have imagined that they could occupy the strangely inconsistent and illogical position of remaining in spiritual union with the Pope as the centre of Catholic unity, while at the same time renouncing and repudiating him as head of the English Church, as a foreign bishop and prince. At least, this seems to have been their position. But at the same time, many of the bishops and clergy saw the impracticability of this. As a matter of fact, they were not at all satisfied with the state of things; their vote was evidently the result of compulsion, and given with sullen acquiescence. They saw with undisguised dismay the inevitable results; and neither sophistry nor misrepresentation could blind them to the fact that the Church and nation were rushing swiftly into schism. A number of the bishops resigned, in order that they might not sanction the revolt from the Pope; and the great mass of the clergy, in their heart of hearts, remained true to the Papal See.

The resignation of these bishops is significant. And the revolt of the clergy is significant also. It shows

us in a very striking way the real state of the Church. These bishops resigned, and these clergy revolted in heart, because the authority of the Pope in the Church of England, usurped though it was, had been long acknowledged; and the Church of England was not only in doctrine, but in ecclesiastical unity, part of the great Catholic Church of the West, of which the Pope of Rome was unquestionable head. At his word before, the Church and the kingdom had been excommunicated; and, according to the theological premises then held by all churchmen, such national and ecclesiastical separation could only be schism. The position taken by Pole in his treatise on the defence of ecclesiastical unity, was the only logical one to any one holding Romanist views. Froude gives a full account of the matter in his history (iii. 29–54).

But on the Scriptural and Reformation principles of the Church, that act of the Church of England in separating from Rome was not separation from the body of Christ and therefore not schism. That this is the position of the Church of England is clearly shown by Bishop Jewel in his great and authoritative work, "The Apology." In this he puts the whole question in a nutshell.

"*We have departed from that Church* which they have made a den of thieves, in which they left nothing sound or like a Church, and which they themselves confessed to have erred in many things, as Lot left Sodom or Abraham Chaldea, not out of contention but out of obedience to God, and we have sought the certain way of religion out of the sacred Scriptures, which we know cannot deceive us, and have returned to the primitive Church of the ancient fathers and Apostles, that is to the origin and first rise of the Church, as it

were to the very beginnings" (Jewel's Works, Park. Soc., i. 46). That is the Church of England *separated* from the Church of Rome, both ecclesiastically and doctrinally, at the Reformation, but did not separate from the Church of Christ.* But according to the sacerdotal and traditional principles of Rome, with its doctrine of the visible Church and the Pope as centre of the Catholic unity, that act of Henry and the Church was unquestionably an act of schism, the beginning of the rending of the seamless robe of Christ, and was not to be borne. A very large number of the clergy revolted, therefore, with heart and voice.

But, as we have said, when the separation took place there was not the slightest thought of such a thing as the renunciation of Romanism, that is, of Romish doctrine. The entire system of doctrinal Romanism, or Popery, remained intact, and numbers of English churchmen were burned to death for not accepting it.

In other words, while the Church of England was declaring its political Protestantism by repudiating the Pope, it was declaring its doctrinal Romanism by burning Protestants.

In proof of this only one case need be referred to. John Frith, a learned and excellent young church-

* Compare Dean Jackson's masterly argument in his work on the Church. The modern idea that the Church of England never separated from the Church of Rome is not historical. It is a mere figment of Church theorizers.

The Act of Supremacy (26 Hen. VIII. c. 1), and the decree of Pope Paul III., *excommunicating* Henry VIII. (and the nation), began the separation which the subsequent events of the Reformation consummated. If the *doctrines* of the Church of Rome are not profoundly and essentially erroneous, then that separation was schism, and the Anglican Church is now schismatical.

man and scholar of Cambridge, had received, through William Tyndale, according to Fox, the seed of the Gospel and the knowledge of the truth. With his increased spiritual enlightenment, Frith wrote a treatise on the Romish doctrine of the Mass, which contained in substance the present teaching of the Church of England on the subject. He showed that the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper is not eaten corporally, but mystically and spiritually, or as the Church teaches now, "only after an heavenly and spiritual manner;" that the feeding is in the heart of the believer by faith; and that the efficacious thing in the reception of the sacrament is faith; all of which is now good Church teaching. "The mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith" (Art. xxviii.).

As the Roman doctrine of the sacrament was then the very life of Popery, the very body of the tree, or rather root of the weeds, as Cranmer said later, Frith was arrested and thrown into the Tower on the charge of heresy. Sir Thomas More promptly came forth as the champion of the Roman Church doctrine, and sharpened his pen to make answer. He declared that Frith's treatise contained "all the poison that Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Zwinglius had taught concerning the blessed sacrament of the altar; not only affirming it to be bread still, as Luther does, but also, as these other beasts do, that it is nothing else." He was brought before the bishops of London, Winchester, and Lincoln, for trial, and sentenced to be burned alive as a heretic. And on the 4th of July, 1533, this saintly young churchman was burned at Smithfield as a martyr in the cause of the truth of Christ. That is, in the very year when the Church of

England repudiated the Pope, John Frith was burned by the Church of England for repudiating Popery. A whole year after the revolt of Convocation from the usurped power of Rome, a young churchman was martyred for setting forth the truth that afterwards became the doctrine of the Church of England; that there is no change in the substance of the bread and wine, or any real presence in the elements because of transubstantiation; that the body of Christ is received by faith only, and eaten mystically and spiritually; and that the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven and not here, since it is not agreeable to reason that He should be in two places or more at once, contrary to the nature of our body (Fox, Book viii.).

A significant thing in connection with Frith's martyrdom was the fact that Cranmer was one of the men before whom he appeared. Cranmer was then Archbishop of Canterbury, and after unavailing attempts to make Frith change his views left him to his fate. Nor need we wonder at this. The primate of the Church of England knew nothing *then* of what the Church of England, mainly through his labours, teaches now. He was still in the spiritual darkness that afterwards he so grievously and pathetically lamented.

"I was in that error of the real presence, as I was many years past in divers other errors; of transubstantiation, and of the sacrifice propitiatory of the priests in the Mass, of pilgrimages, purgatory, pardons, and many other superstitions and errors that came from Rome, being brought up from my youth in them, . . . the floods of papistical errors at that time overflowing the world. For the which, and other offences in my youth, I do daily pray unto

God for mercy and pardon. . . . But after it had pleased God to show unto me, by His Holy Word, a more perfect knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ, from time to time, as I grew in knowledge of Him, by little and little I put away my former ignorance" (Works, Park. Soc., i. 374).

And Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of the Church, was burned to death in the year 1556, for holding the doctrine that he condemned Frith for holding in 1533 (Gal. i. 23).

It was the same with the other martyrs of the reign of Henry VIII. They were burned for believing the Protestant and evangelical doctrine of the Holy Communion, and for upholding the principles of the Reformation; in other words, for believing then what is now the teaching of the Church of England.

To deny this, or to say that it is a fallacy that the Church of England was ever Roman, seems almost to indicate a determination to ignore the facts of history in order to maintain an ecclesiastical theory.

LXX. *But it may be asked here if the Church of England held after the Reformation doctrines which it repudiated as heresies before the Reformation, how, in that case, can the Church of England be said to be the same Church after the Reformation that it was before?*

This is a very grave difficulty with students of English Church history, but it is only a surface difficulty after all. A little reflection will show that a satisfactory answer can be given.

As a body corporate it was the same. It had the same name, and it was in the same place. The churches were the churches of the Church of England, and the convocations and synods were

its synods and convocations. The Church after the Reformation retained the same name, the same churches, and in the main the same constitution. It was not its constitution or name, but *its doctrine* that was changed. The Church in England after the Reformation was the same institution as the Church in England before the Reformation. As Mr. Freeman puts it; the Church was not established then, it was reformed. Nor must any credit be given to the assertion of certain modern Roman Catholics that the revenues of the Church of England belonged by right to the Roman Catholic Church, and were unlawfully wrested from it. The Church of England while Roman Catholic in doctrinal union was the legal proprietor of all the temporalities. Roman Catholics have no claim whatsoever to the temporalities and revenues of the Church of England. Whatever claims they may have once made were usurped, and by the legislative enactments of Henry VIII. completely illegalized.*

LXXI. *Did Henry VIII., then, after the separation from the Pope, do anything towards reforming the doctrine of the Church?*

* The statement made by certain Roman controversialists in England that the revenues of the Church were transferred by the statutes 1 Eliz. cap. i., and 1 Eliz. cap. ii. of 1559, from the Roman Catholic Church to the Protestant Church is unfounded. The statutes are the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, and neither of them refers to Church revenues, and consequently says nothing of any transfer of revenues from one Church to another.

In the year 1826 the Roman Catholic bishops in Great Britain issued a declaration in section ix. of which they declared: "We regard all the revenues and temporalities of the Church establishment as the property of those on whom they are settled by the laws of the land. We disclaim any right, title, or pretension, with regard to the same." Quoted from a letter by G. H. F. Nye in the *Catholic Champion*, March, 1895.

No. That is directly, and purposely; for he was violently opposed to the reforming opinions. But in another sense he did, the overruling hand of God being very clearly seen through it all. He was now committed to the cause of Protestantism in the political or national sense. The spirit of national pride and English independence was burning within him, and he longed to show his disdain of the Italian interloper and his defiance of the long-borne impertinence of Rome.

"The Pope,
Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England
Add thus much more, that no Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,
So under God that great supremacy
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold
Without the assistance of a mortal hand:
So tell the Pope, all reverence set apart
To him and his usurped authority."—*King John*, act iii. sc. 1.

He had thrown off a political and ecclesiastical incubus, and had shown the world the meaning of British freedom. It is true that he only thought of freedom from the temporal power of Rome, and protest against the Pope's temporal authority; he never dreamed that he was but an instrument in the mighty hand of God to liberate the Church of England from the deadlier bondage of Popery. He hated the Pope, and determined with his imperial power to destroy his supremacy as the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England. Yet while he certainly had no intention of aiding in the work of the Reformation, and probably hated the Reformers as heartily as he hated the Pope, he was nevertheless led to aid the cause of reforming the religion and the Church of England in a way that was far beyond his original

purpose. It was inevitable that defiance of the Pope in matters secular should be followed by other and more weighty reforms. Accordingly we find this Papist-king in the mysterious providence of God unconsciously forwarding the Protestantism of the Church.

From the human standpoint the explanation was simple. The die was cast. The Rubicon was passed. He simply had to move onward. He was committed by his position to the Protestant side. But the real explanation was higher than that. "The heart of the king was in the hands of the Lord; as the rivers of water, *He* turned it whithersoever He would." A Divinity was shaping his ends.

LXXII. *What, then, were these actions of the king that paved the way for the progress of the reforming opinions in the Church?*

In the first place, a national anti-Papal crusade of a most practical kind was set on foot by the king himself. A royal letter was addressed to the justices of the peace throughout the land, and the bishops of every diocese, enjoining "that every prayer-book or mass-book in which the Pope of Rome was named, and his presumptuous pomp preferred, was utterly to be abolished, eradicated, and rased out, and that his name and memory were to be never more (except to his contumely and reproach) remembered."

In addition to this, sermons were to be preached to the people of the land every Sunday and high feast day against the usurped jurisdiction of the Pope, and preaching friars, civic officials of every town, and all the nobility were ordered to join right heartily in the good Protestant work. We may rightly regard this as an evidence of God's wonderful ways. Certainly

without this destructive work of hewing down and casting out of the false, the constructive work of bringing in and building up of the truth would never have been accomplished.

In the next place a set of royal injunctions were set forth to the effect that preachers were henceforth to preach the Scriptures and the word of Christ, and that for the space of a whole year the clergy were to be silent on the subjects of purgatory, the worship of saints and relics, the marriage of the clergy, pilgrimages, and miracles.

The spirit of Protestantism was growing apace. If the ultimate spirit of evangelical and spiritual Protestantism is the determination of truth in the light of reason and the Word of God by a particular Church or individual Christian without reference to the presumptuous infallibility of an Italian, the action of the king in imposing silence with regard to such necessary articles of the Roman faith as purgatory and saint worship, was a defiance of the Pope, as yet without precedent in the history of the Catholic Church. The cases of Grosseteste, and Wycliffe, and others, are hardly parallel. Their action was personal, irresponsible, private. This was a public, official, authorised act, affecting the body corporate of *the Church.*

In the next place, and it is a wonderful thing when we think of it, a book was published by authority in English, which in that day was to all intents and purposes a prayer-book of the people of the Church of England. It was not exactly a Church prayer-book, for the Romish worship, in Latin of course, was observed in the churches. It was rather a kind of private book of devotions, of which not a few had been

in England for years. They were not, however, in common use, as the cost of printed books was great, and the number of people who could read, small; and they contained, moreover, many superstitions and false doctrines. "They abounded with infinite errors and perilous prayers." But this primer or prayer-book of Henry VIII. was intended to be for the people, and though attempts were made to suppress it, it ran through more than one edition, and was widely circulated.* Many things, doubtless, contributed to make it popular with the people. It was in English, a grand thing to begin with, for in those days all religious works were supposed to be in Latin. It was expressly for the people to buy and sell, and not confined to clerics. It was practical and helpful to the spiritual cravings of the religiously inclined, containing prayers, and psalms, and instructions. But above all, there was a ring of anti-Roman boldness in it that struck an answering chord in all true English hearts; a Protestantism that was almost prematurely audacious. It denounced as blasphemous, the practice of invoking God by the merits of the saints; warned men against saint worship and prayer to the Virgin; and declared the practice of carrying about images, painted papers, and crosses, to be superstitious. Considering the date of its publication, 1534–1535, it was a most material aid to the cause of reform, and indicated a very forward movement. The revolt from Romanism was becoming almost as pronounced as the revolt from the Pope.

* For an account of this Primer, commonly known as Marshall's Primer, *see* Stephens' "Book of Common Prayer," i.-vi.; and also Collier's "Ecc. Hist.," ii. 110–112, where an extended account of it is given.

But the action of the king that gave the greatest impetus to the reforming movement was that step to which we have already referred, the publication of the Bible in English. It was, as an English historian terms it, the greatest because the purest victory so far gained by the Reformers.

The series of events by which it was brought about were remarkable even in that remarkable time. It was like a miracle.

For up to this time it was a penal offence to have a Testament in English, nor was there a sign of a change of mind on the part of the mass of the bishops and clergy. They hated the Bible as much as ever, and were extremely opposed to the reading of the Scriptures. The vernacular Bible was to most of them the parent of all damnable heresies. As to the king he had no particular love for the Bible. There is not to be found in his whole career a trace of the spirit of that profound reverence for the Book that animated Tyndale and Latimer. How then did it ever come to pass that within a few months after Tyndale was put to death for translating the Scriptures, the whole Bible was put forth by the king's authority.

It may be, who can tell, that there still rang through the corridors of the royal memory the refrain of that grand appeal addressed to him by brave Hugh Latimer six years before. It was a noble letter, a very bearding of the lion in his den, pleading with the king who had just permitted a deadly proclamation against them, to have the Scriptures in English; and was inspired throughout with that sublime conscientiousness and fearlessness of man, that the fear of God alone can give. He told the

king that he would rather be a traitor to him, mighty and redoubted as he was, than be a traitor to His God; and would rather lose honour, promotion, fame, yea life itself, than deny Christ and His truth; that the Church authorities of the realm, like the Pharisees of old, were shutting up the kingdom of heaven to the people, making it treason to have the Bible in English; that the lives of the Master and His apostles were in vivid contrast, an argument against the pomp and riches and ambitions of the ecclesiastics, and the reason why they hindered the Holy Scripture in the mother tongue was a fear of the light being let in on their darkness; "wherefore, good king," he went on to plead, "let not these worldly men make your grace believe that the Scriptures will cause insurrections and heresies and such mischiefs as they imagine of their own mad brains, or think that the New Testament translations were the cause of the breaking of your grace's laws, for these books be not the cause thereof no more than was the bodily presence of Christ and His Words, the cause that Judas fell; remember yourself, gracious king, have pity upon your soul, and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword." *

Surely such a letter as that, with an audacity and plainness almost superhuman, must have touched even such a heart as that of Henry; and one loves to think that, like the seed cast upon the waters, its fruit

* The letter is given in full in the "Remains of Latimer" (Parker Society, pp. 297–309). Froude rightly describes it as "an address of almost unexampled grandeur."

was found after many days in the remarkable change of the royal mind. But though this in the providence of God was very probable, there are other causes that are less conjectural.

For one thing the king could not help clearly recognising the possible harm to the Catholic faith by the circulation of unauthorised versions by Lutheran or Zwinglian translators. It was a fact that was patent to a less shrewd observer of the times than he, and he was not long in coming to the conclusion, that it would be a very good thing for the kingdom to have an authorised version of the whole Bible. Another thing was that the Pope was very much opposed to the Scriptures. As Henry at that time was very much opposed to the Pope, it was a logical inference that he should side with the Bible. Another thing was that in spite of all prohibition and prosecution the Scriptures were having a very large circulation. And then in addition to all this Cromwell and Cranmer were uniting their influence with the king on behalf of the Bible.

Thus in the providence of God it came to pass that the king was led to take up the matter in earnest. The bishops some time before had promised to produce an orthodox translation, but the convenient season had been delayed and delayed until even Cranmer lost patience, and declared that if it was left to the bishops it would not be finished till after doomsday. It was clear enough to Henry and Cromwell that the bishops were playing the same game with regard to the Bible, that Campeggio played with regard to the divorce. There was no hope from that quarter, even though a reluctant

Convocation through the fear of man had passed a resolution to the effect that the translation should be performed. In the meantime, Miles Coverdale, afterwards Bishop of Exeter, an advocate of the reformed opinions, was labouring at Bible translation, and on the 4th of October, 1536, a red-letter day in English Church history, published the whole Bible in English, and presented it to the king. The king committed it to divers bishops to ascertain if there were any heresies maintained by it, and when they reported that there were none, he said, "If there be no heresies, then, in God's name, let it go abroad among our people." Thus, under the patronage of the king himself, the Word of God in the language of the people was at last brought out, and soon widely spread abroad. It was the greatest aid to the principles of the Reformation that could have been possibly devised, for without the Bible there could have been no Reformation. It was more. For as Froude happily expresses it, in this act was laid the foundation stone on which the whole later history of England, civil and ecclesiastical, has been reared.

In the year 1537 another English translation of the Bible was published, known as the Matthews' Bible—Thomas Matthews being in reality a pseudonym for William Tyndale, the main translator—which was presented by Cromwell to the king, and afterwards printed with the words: "Set forth with the king's most gracious license" (Coverdale's Works, Park. Soc., i. x.).

Very shortly after a new edition was begun, and in the year 1539 the Bible, known as the Great Bible, was brought forth; in the production of which, as Fox

tells us, Bishop Bonner, at that time in Paris, had no small hand.

It is a marvellous instance of the ways of God, that the very man who ordered the New Testament of Tyndale to be burned, should be the instrument for the introduction of the whole Bible in the translation of which Tyndale was the chief performer; and that the very bishop who promised by the grace of God to do all that he could to further the spread of the Scriptures in English, and to set up the Bible in the Church, should have been Edmund Bonner, Bishop of Hereford, and afterwards of London, a most bitter and bloody opponent of the Reformed religion. Not only was the Bible thus printed and circulated, but by Royal command a copy was set up in every church, "to the confusion of the Romanists, the exultation of the Reformers, and the rejoicing of Archbishop Cranmer."

As we remarked in the last chapter, the publication of the Bible must be regarded by the student of English Church history as one of the cardinal epochs of the Reformation period. But there is this difference between the publication now being spoken of, and that referred to in the last chapter. Before, it was the secret, unauthorised, and individual work of a partial and proscribed copy of the Scriptures; now the whole Bible is given to the people of the Church of England, and by the authority of the earthly head of the Church, as we shall presently see, is set up for the public reading of every congregation. The very books of the Bible translated by William Tyndale, which were separately condemned and prohibited, are now collectively sanctioned and propagated by the same authority. We say again;

it was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

In the following chapter we shall follow with a little more minuteness the cause of Church reform during the reign of Henry VIII. We consider the study of this reign to be of great significance, as it is only by an understanding of the various steps by which the Church of England was gradually led out of Romanism, that its present doctrinal position can accurately be determined.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PROGRESSIVE PROTESTANTIZING OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Further ways in which Henry VIII. helped the reform cause—The dissolution of the monasteries—Stained by many scandals, yet inevitable—The monastic establishments a cancer in the body politic—Their identity with the national life—Four facts concerning their suppression worth noting—Not the first suppression—Romanists were the chief actors—Not essentially illegal or unjust—The reformation of the Church impossible without their removal—The Ten Articles of religion, 1536—Marks an important epoch in the Church—The revolutionary principle that a national Church can formulate doctrine apart from Rome — Brought about curiously by an effort to destroy the Reformation principles—Archdeacon Gwent's protest in Convocation—Was cause of publication of the Ten Articles—These Articles the declaration of doctrinal independence of the English Church—Difference between their teaching and the present teaching of the Church—Not Protestant, but in the Protestant direction—Not that the King or the Council thought of such a thing—Two further proofs—Certain Roman Saints' days abolished—A General Council protested against—Effects of the Ten Articles—The King's Book, and the Injunctions of 1538—The institution of a Christian man—Semi-Romish and semi-Protestant—Its teaching on the Catholic Church remarkably evangelical—The King's Injunctions of 1538—Their attempted evasion—Summary of the Church's progress.

THE progress so far made in the reformed direction by the Church of England has been decided and hopeful. The Church is still a long way from the goal of reform; yet, as we have seen, the wayward monarch has been used as an instrument in the hand of the King of kings for the accomplishment of the most important of the preliminary steps to that great achievement. The imperialism of Rome has been crushed. The Church of England has been liberated from the Pope. The elements of anti-

Roman independence are at work. Some of the most vital articles of Romanism are being undermined. A pioneer of liturgical worship has appeared. And by royal authority the Book of books is given to the people.

LXXIII. *Were there any other ways in which the actions of Henry VIII. contributed to the cause of reform?*

There were. Two things especially may be specially mentioned as material aids to the Reformation of the Church; the suppression of the monasteries, and the publication of the Ten Articles in 1536.

The suppression of the monasteries might be referred to first. It was a violent movement, and, like all revolutionary transactions, stained by many scandals. The motives that prompted it were mixed enough, and the ways in which it was carried out were disgraceful often beyond apology. And yet it was a movement that was not only politically but religiously inevitable.

From the standpoint of Henry VIII. it was simply a necessity. In the terse language of Blunt, if the king had not put down the monks, the monks would soon have put down the king. They were everywhere the most bitter, stubborn defenders of the Pope, and used all their vigilance and power against the king. Not only were they in large measure idle, greedy, immoral, and covetous; they were a pestiferous cancer in the body politic. They were a set of interlopers. Their interests were Papal, not English. They were Papists first, Englishmen afterwards. "The monks," it was said, "were the Pope's garrison in England." Not only were they ultramontanes, and therefore worthy of all suppression

for the very sake of the royal supremacy; they were rich, and to the royal mind their wealth might be poured into more advantageous and necessary channels.

It was in the year 1535 that a committee of inquiry into the condition of the religious houses was formed, and in the beginning of the following year they made their report to Parliament, revealing a state of licentiousness and corruption that excited even the indignation of the Romanists. An act was at once passed suppressing all monasteries whose income was not over £200 a-year, about £2000 a-year of our money, by which act 376 were swept away. According to Hallam, there were between 400 and 500 monasteries at the time in England, so that about three-fourths or four-fifths of the whole fell at one blow. Afterwards, quite a number voluntarily surrendered their estates to the king, while others resigned under promise of provision or pension, or from fear of exposure.

Rarely, if ever, was axe laid so swiftly to the root of such a tree.

In a thousand and one ways the whole monastic system was identified with the life of the nation. Their establishments dotted the land; richer in many cases than noblemen's halls, grander than palaces, stronger than castles. Their gifts and alms were the life of the poor; their medicines and physic were the health of the sick. They were the hospitals, the almshouses, the dispensaries, the laboratories, the poorhouses, the refuges, and the infirmaries of the nation. There was scarcely a rich man in the land who was not in some way interested in them; there was scarcely a poor man who was not dependent on them.

They constituted more than a third of the House of Lords. Their influence was enormous; their wealth prodigious; the number of their inmates and dependents beyond calculation. And yet in the strange providence of God this gigantic national system so long engrained in the people's life, and the strongest bulwark of Romanism in the land, was brought down almost at one blow, and utterly demolished by Henry and Cromwell.

"How suddenly, did they consume, perish, and come to a fearful end!"

It is well, however, for churchmen to remember in connection with this much discussed question the following facts:—

First, This was by no means the first suppression of the monasteries; nor was it the inauguration of a terrible legal precedent for the forfeiture and transfer of freehold properties. As far back as the reign of Edward the Third the revenues of priories had been forfeited and transferred to other purposes by the State. In the year 1414 over a hundred priories were thus suppressed, and their escheated estates passed over to the Crown. As late as 1525, the greatest Roman of them all, Cardinal Wolsey, by authority of Papal bulls, and ostensibly for their worthlessness and sin, suppressed a large number of monasteries and convents, and transferred their revenues to the State for educational uses. The number suppressed is uncertain, ranging, according to Hallam, from twenty (Strype) to forty (Collier).

Second, That in this suppression or spoliation of the monastic establishments, Romanists, not Protestants, were the chief ones to blame. One of the most violent inquisitors of the monasteries was Dr. London,

a bigoted Papist. Pope Innocent VIII. issued a bull for their reform, and it was by the bulls of the Pope that Wolsey did his work. The mightiest destroyer of them all, the very head and hand of the movement, was the strong and uncompromising Papist, Henry VIII., who, if he was in any sense a reformer, was so not because of, but in spite of his principles. On the other hand, the men who pleaded hardest for the retention of various monasteries as centres of Christian beneficence, and advocated the use of their revenues for the establishment of colleges and theological halls, and for the extension of the episcopate by the founding of new bishoprics, were the reformers Latimer and Cranmer. While Parliament slavishly acquiesced in their wholesale transfer to the irresponsible king, and even Cromwell seems to have been culpable, the Protestant reformers of the day were not slow to express their indignation.

Third, This act of suppressing the monasteries, however gigantic in its extent and reprehensible in the details of its execution, was not essentially illegal or unjust. There is a real distinction, as Hallam points out, between private property possessed by an individual and corporate property belonging to an institution.* In the case of private property there is rightful and natural expectancy on the part of successors and heirs, which amounts to an hereditary claim of the strongest possible kind; yet even this has been legally set aside by the law of forfeiture. In the case of corporate property there is no such

* The case is stated with masterly conciseness in Hallam's "Constitutional History," chapter ii.

intercommunity of interest, and it is quite justifiable for the legislature to forfeit them if the interests of the State demand it.

Fourth, and most important. That in the wonderful providence of God this most unexpected movement was the removal of one of the greatest, if not the greatest, barrier that stood in the way of the advancing tide of reformation. Nowhere was Popery so strongly intrenched as in the monastic system! The transformation of the Church of England into a Protestant and evangelical Church would, humanly speaking, have been impossible without its previous destruction. The extirpation of the monasteries removed the strongholds of ultramontanism and Popery throughout the land by displacing the popular exponents of Romanism, and ejecting the Pope's party from the House of Lords (Perry, ii. 136; Hallam, "Constit. Hist.," chap. ii.); and the diffusion of their estates amongst the people of the land, and the distribution of their revenues amongst the nobles and gentry either by gift or easy sale, contributed in no small measure to the stability of the anti-Papal reaction in the nation, and to the strengthening of "that territorial aristocracy which was to withstand the enormous prerogatives of the crown." Thus, while deploring the violence and unrighteousness of man we can only admire the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of Him who of old said of a pagan potentate, "He is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure," and Who thus employed a Romanist king to open wide a great and effectual door for the promotion of the reformation of the Church. For as Fox well said, the fall of the monasteries could not have

followed unless the suppression of the Pope's supremacy had gone before; neither could any true reformation of the Church have been attempted unless the subversion of those superstitious houses had taken place. The bill for the suppression of the smaller monasteries passed in February, 1536. In 1537 the larger monasteries were visited, and before the end of 1538 nearly all were dissolved.

The publication of the Ten Articles of Religion marks another important step in the direction of the reform principles. In fact it marks a step more important and more revolutionary than even the abolition of the Pope's supremacy itself. As we have seen, the renunciation of the Pope's supremacy had nothing whatever to do with the renunciation of the Pope's doctrine. It was an act of national, not of religious, Protestantism. Now, however, for the first time in the history of the Church of England, the Church of England as a Church and a national religious establishment adopts one of the primary and fundamental articles of evangelical and Protestant religion; the position that it is not only possible for a Church to differ from Rome, but that it is right and lawful and necessary for a Church to formulate *its own articles of doctrine*.

It was a position, indeed, in one way that was not novel. For since the days of Wycliffe there had not been wanting individual churchmen, who in greater or smaller numbers had dissented from the doctrines of the Holy Roman Church, which were the universal and undisputed doctrines of the Western Church. They acted upon the principle that the Word of God is the final standard of doctrine, and the Holy Spirit the only infallible director of faith, and for that reason

dissented from the prevailing doctrines of the Catholic Church.

But then their protest and dissent was merely the dissent and private judgment of unrepresentative individuals.

It was not the opinion or action of the Church. Now on the contrary, at the instance of the learned king himself, the Church as a whole, in its archbishops and bishops, and houses of convocation, accepted the Protestant position that it had the right and the authority, not only to regulate its ceremonies and rites, but also to formulate its own articles of doctrine. And it put it into practice. In the year 1536 it set forth a series of articles of religion which presented a revolt from the Roman doctrinal system that is wonderful to think of.

Scarcely two years have elapsed since the representatives of the nation solemnly recorded that in rejecting the domination of the Pope they were determined not to alter any article of the faith of the Pope. It may be safely asserted that not only Bishop Gardiner and the king, but a vast number of the churchmen of the day, believed that the only reformation required was moral reformation. It was their belief that the cause of reform had gone quite far enough when the encroachments of the Roman pontiff were successfully repelled (Hardwicke, "Articles," p. 32). The mass of them never thought of such a thing as revolt from Popery, that is, from the doctrinal and liturgical system of the Holy Roman Church. The creed of Rome was quite good enough for them. The ritual of the Roman Church was quite agreeable. To question the number of the sacraments, the worship of images and saints, the absolving power of

the priest, and the ceremonies of holy mother Church was detestable to a true "Catholic."

How was it then that in so brief a period so reactionary or rather so progressive a procedure as the declaration of English Church independence in matters of doctrine could be brought about? Strangely enough this most important movement of the Church in the direction of the principles of the Reformation owed its origin apparently to an effort to stem and stay those principles.

It happened in this way.

In the fourth session of the Southern Convocation of 1536, the Prolocutor of the Lower House, Archdeacon Gwent, presented in the name of the clergy a very plain-spoken protest against certain errors which were then publicly preached, printed, and professed. As a matter of fact it was simply a declaration of war on the part of the clergy, the majority of whom were Romish, against the spread of the principles of the Reformation.

The things which they complained of, as erroneous and blasphemous opinions requiring special reformation, were largely in reality those principles and practices which afterwards became the principles and practices of the reformed Church of England; such as protests against the mass as blasphemous and foolish, and revolts against unscriptural and superstitious ceremonies. There were intermingled indeed with these a few extravagant and irreverent articles, the natural excrescences of fanaticism, which the reforming party would be last to champion; but in the main, Gwent's impeachment was the impeachment of evangelical Christianity and the present principles of the Church of England. (Read Hardwick's "History of the

Articles," pp. 34, 35; Perry's "Church History," ii. 144, and compare Articles xxii., xxv., xxviii., xxxi.) As a great Church author said, the principles opposed were the Protestant religion in ore. They were to the present doctrinal principles of the Church, what the Prayer-Book of 1549 was to our present Prayer-Book, a pioneer and preparer of the way.

Little did Gwent and his party dream that in presenting this address for the purpose of effecting the reformation of a few individual Protestants in the direction of Rome, he was about to forward the great purpose of God in effecting a reformation of the whole Church of England in the direction of Protestantism. Yet it was even so.

The results of this address to the Upper House were by no means trivial. In the first place, it was the means of bringing into clear distinction the parties representing the two great movements in the Church. The Romish party, the party of Lee and Gardiner and Tonstal, stationary, if not retrogressive, on the one side; the reform party, the party of Cranmer and Latimer and Goodrich, progressive, if not revolutionary, on the other.

In the next place, it was the means of clearly and strongly defining the chasm that divided them in doctrinal opinions. Those things which the Reformers held to be the truth of God and Christ and the Apostles and the Scriptures, and are now called the principles of the Reformation and the teaching of the Church of England, the Romish party held to be erroneous and blasphemous opinions, obnoxious and heretical. The new doctrines were seditious novelties; the breeders of false doctrine, heresy, and schism.

Those things which the Roman party held to be

essential principles of the Church and the Gospel, their views on the priesthood, the altar, and the mass, the reforming party were already beginning to doubt, and afterwards declared to be blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits.

In the third place, it was the means of the publication of the Ten Articles of the Church of England.

Soon after this affair, Cromwell, who sat as president of Convocation, representing the king, delivered a very striking address to the effect that the king earnestly desired that they should proceed to the work of framing the doctrine of the Church by the Word of God, without wrasting or defacing the Scripture "*by any gloses, any papisticall lawes, or by any authority of doctours or counselles.*"

A remarkable speech it was, with a strong Protestant ring in it, and great was the debate it occasioned. The minority party was represented by Cranmer, who outlined in his speech the very kernel and essence of evangelical religion, the necessity of inward religion and justification by faith; and the Romish or medieval party by Stokesley, Bishop of London, who contended with great earnestness for the seven sacraments and the pre-Reformation system of doctrine. After a prolonged and vigorous discussion, a set of Ten Articles emanating, it is generally supposed, from the hand of Henry VIII. himself (Hardwick, "Hist. Articles," pp. 39, 41), and revised by a representative committee, were adopted by Convocation, and signed by Cromwell and the Archbishop and the representatives of both Houses.

The Articles were, on the very face of them a compromise, and with the avowed object of including all parties they satisfied none.

They were not Popish enough to please the Romanists; they were too Popish to please the Reformers. Yet they marked a step that may well be a cause of satisfaction to all true English Churchmen, and that was *the declaration of the doctrinal independence of the Church of England as a particular or national Church with regard to the Church of Rome.*

It was the issue of a body of formulated Articles representing the doctrine and teaching of the Church of England.* In one word, the issue of these Articles by the king and the clergy, was the establishment in principle of the great fundamental position of Protestant and evangelical Christianity, the right and the duty of a Church to act independently altogether of the claims of an infallible director of the faith of the Church. And in drawing up her own doctrines, the Church of England asserted in principle the position of her doctrinal Protestantism, as strongly as she asserted her political Protestantism in rejecting the Papal supremacy.†

In matters of doctrine, the Church of England had now become an independent and non-Roman ecclesiastical body. The time had not yet come for her to be *anti-Roman* and evangelically Protestant; but in the

* "It is needless to observe that these formularies of the faith put forth in the reign of Henry VIII., cannot pretend to any authority in the Church of England at the present day.

"Nothing antecedent to the reign of Edward VI. has any title to that character.

"It was only in the reign of Edward VI. that the errors of Romanism were *formally* renounced, and the pure doctrines of Scripture authoritatively established in this kingdom" (Bishop Lloyd, Preface "Formularies of Faith," Henry VIII.).

† It was a distinct disclaimer of what had practically become a canon of the Roman faith; that the doctrines of the Catholic Church ought not to be examined by any particular Church.

wonderful providence of God she had established one of the initial principles of the Reformation, the right of ecclesiastical private judgment. In other words, her right of private judgment as a particular or national or independent Church.

LXXIV. *In their teaching then these Ten Articles of* 1536 *were not what we would now call Protestant and evangelical?*

No. They were not.

In many respects they differed but slightly from the Romish doctrine, and countenanced most of the prevailing superstitions. The second Article on baptism taught the Romish doctrine, *ex opere operato.** The third Article taught that penance was a sacrament, and necessary to salvation, that confession must be made to the priest, whose absolution was to be received by authority given to him by Christ in the Gospel.

The fourth Article, entitled the Sacrament of the Altar, declared that "*under the form and figure* of the bread and wine is substantially and really comprehended the very self-same body and blood of our Saviour, which was born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered on the cross; that the very self-same body and blood of Christ, under the form and figure of bread

* In a book published by the Religious Tract Society, "The English Reformation," by W. H. Beckett, this statement occurs with regard to the Ten Articles of 1536: "The Article on baptism is in accord with that *now held by the Church of England.*" I am informed that the author is not a Churchman, and, therefore, not presumed to be familiar with the teaching of the Church of England; but it does seem strange that an intelligent English Nonconformist should be guilty of such ignorance of the teaching of the Church of England as set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles. See my work on the "Protestantism of the Prayer-Book," Third Edition, p. 82. London: Shaw & Co.; also, Goode on Baptism.

and wine, is *corporally*, *really*, and *in the very substance* exhibited, distributed, and received unto, and of all them which receive the said sacrament;" a doctrine since repudiated entirely by the Church of England and distinctly denied in Articles xxv., xxviii., xxix., and in the post-communion rubric. The sixth, seventh, and eighth Articles permitted images in churches, honour to saints, and prayers to the saints, with safe-guards in each case against abuses. The ninth Article enjoined the retention of vestments, holy water, holy bread, candle, ashes, and other ceremonies, adding a caution with a strong evangelical flavour, to the effect that none of these ceremonies have power to remit sin.

The tenth Article was a strong plea for prayers for the departed, insisting upon the duty of committing them to God's mercy in our prayers, and of causing others to pray for them in masses and obsequies in order to rescue them the sooner from purgatory; but a caution was put against presumptuous assertions of familiarity with the place and state of the departed, and a remonstrance was made against the scandalous abuses of the Papal pardons and indulgences.

No. They could hardly in the reformed sense be called evangelical or Protestant. But they were most *decidedly in that direction.*

Though tinctured with Popery, the effect of the Articles on the whole was clearly to the advantage of the principles of the Reformation. The first Article, though not attaining the evangelical maturity of the sixth, and twentieth, and twenty-first Articles of the Church of England to-day, was yet a striking declaration when we consider the age, and the opposition of the medievalists.

It affirmed that the fundamentals of our faith

are comprehended in the whole body and canon of the Bible, and also in the three creeds, and recognises the authority of the four holy councils.

The fifth Article on justification defines it to be the remission of sins, and our acceptance with God, that is to say, our perfect renovation in Christ; that it is attained by contrition, faith, and love, not as the meritorious causes thereof, but as the accompanying conditions; and that good works must follow as evidential of our charity and obedience towards God.

The strong and unmistakable cautions against abuses in the sixth, seventh, and eighth Articles, and the outspoken protests against the corruptions of the Papal system of indulgences, proved most clearly the growth of the reactionary feeling against Rome, and the influence of the reforming party. And last, but not least, the absolute silence maintained about orders, confirmation, matrimony, and extreme unction, has been considered by most historians as a constructive denial of their sacramental character.

As a whole, the Ten Articles of Henry VIII. may be taken as an index of the rising of the tide of Reformation opinions in the Church of England; and, though the progress is not very great, or the advance very rapid, the progress and advance towards evangelical doctrine is clear and certain. They and the injunctions of 1538, which will be referred to presently, are the high-water-mark of the principles of the Reformation before the days of Edward VI.

LXXV. *But did the King and Convocation consider their importance from the Protestant standpoint, or promulgate them with the idea of establishing such a position?*

Possibly not.

It is more than probable that very complex motives had to do with making the Articles what they were. The motives of the step were partly political, partly anti-Papal. One motive probably, was Henry's desire to show his indifference to, if not to irritate, the Pope. The other was to avoid making common cause with the Lutherans in their doctrinal confessions. The motives of the step were not lofty ; nor the importance of it comprehended. So far from their setting forth these Articles as a declaration of Reformation principles, they believed, or thought that they believed, that this involved no departure from the old religion.

And this is really the marvellous thing about it, and the visible proof of God's hand.

Unconsciously they were doing the very opposite of what they thought they were doing. They thought that by setting forth a set of Articles comprising the definite teaching of the Church of England, they would check the spread of the new opinions without departing in any essential degree from the universally received doctrine of Western Christendom. Instead of which they *did* depart from the teaching of the Roman (Catholic) Church in several very important particulars, by adopting almost Lutheran opinions on the subjects of the sacraments and the mass ; and by taking the bold and revolutionary position that the Church had a right to formulate its teaching, apart from the universally received doctrines of what was to them the then Catholic Church, that is, the Roman communion, they established a precedent for the promulgation of those articles of doctrine which in a

few years were to embody as the teaching of the Church of England the very heresies which the old school were doing all in their power to withstand. Though they knew it not, they had, as Green puts it, broken the spell of tradition. And more. By this petty leaven they had leavened the whole lump, and set men's minds drifting and questioning (Blunt, "Reformation," p. 186; Southey, "Book of the Church," 246; Perry's "Reformation," pp. 47, 48; Green, "History Eng. People," ii. 203).

This is shown, if further proof is needed, by two facts, that need only be briefly alluded to. The first, the question of the Saints' days and holy days, which were then, as now, a prominent and integral part of the Romish Church system. The holy Roman Church had very strict ideas on the observation of these festivals of the saints, and insisted then, as now, on their invocation, and, in a special or inferior degree, upon their worship. Her calendar was copious, and the doctrine of saint invocation rigidly enforced.

It was an act of most Protestant significance then for them formally to vote, and for Henry to enjoin (Fox, p. 550), that nearly all the Saints' days which fell in harvest-time should be abolished, that the holy days on the other parts of the year should be diminished, and that a new feast day, to be known as the Feast of Dedication for all Churches, should be appointed. A Church that in the year 1536 could deliberately cut off a large number of the recognised feasts of the then Catholic Church, and appoint a new one in the very teeth of the Roman calendar, was developing the spirit of Protestantism in no small degree.

The second fact was, that at this Convocation a very strong protest was put on record against the General Council which the new Pope, Paul the Third, proposed holding shortly at Mantua. In most vigorous language, they plainly stated that the said Council, ostensibly summoned for the purpose of being a Catholic Council, was really promoted for the purposes of private malice and worldly ambition; and declared that neither the Bishop of Rome nor any other prince had any right, upon his own individual authority, to summon a General Council.*

Then the King himself sent a formal protest against the Pope's proposed action, and in still stronger language.

"We have been so long acquainted with Romish subtleties and Popish deceits," he said in effect, "that we readily understood that the Bishop of Rome intended an assembly of his own adherents, both the time and the place appointed by him showing that he knew full well few or none of the Christian princes could attend.

"These Popish bulls, indeed! What king is there who is not cited and summoned by a proud minister and servant of kings, to come and bolster up errors, frauds, deceits, and untruths, and to set forth this feigned general council.

"But, after all, what do we care either for what they have done, or intend to do. England has taken leave of Popish crafts for ever, never to be deluded with them hereafter. Roman bishops have nothing to do

* A copy of this and a part of another paper on the same subject may be found in Collier's "Collection of Records," Num. xxxvii., p. 28.

with English people. We will have none of their merchandise, none of their stuff. We will receive them into our Council no more.

"We do not object to a general council, we heartily desire it, and indeed pray often to God that we may have one. But we want it to be a holy council, and a general council; not one where every man that differs from the Bishop of Rome is silenced, and the Pope's own cause is handled by the Pope's own cardinals and the Pope's own bishops, with the Pope himself as judge and president of the council. Such a proceeding as this would not be for the deciding of controversies, but for the establishment of errors. No. We will have the Pope and his adherents to understand what we have often said, and now say, and ever will say; he nor his hath neither authority nor jurisdiction in England. We solemnly protest against their Papistical kingdom and tyranny."*

But let us revert to the Ten Articles once more.

LXXVI. *What was the effect of these Articles upon the Church generally? Did they advance the cause championed by Cromwell and Cranmer, and strengthen the interests of reform?*

It is not an easy question to answer. Probably they did. For one thing they caused no little stir, and evoked great opposition from the Romish party. The clergy of the north and east sprang up like one man in defiance. In fact they went so far as to assemble in a kind of convocation at York, and declare that all preaching against purgatory and

* The original in Latin is given by Collier. Records xxxviii. The Protestants of Germany answered the bull also, and Fox terms the protest of the king, "a protestation in the name of the king, and the whole Council and Clergy of England."

saint worship should be punished; that neither the king nor any other "temporal man" can be supreme head of the Church or should exercise any spiritual power or jurisdiction; and that dispensations and indulgences of the Popes are good and valid. The people of the north also rose in a rebellion, which at one time looked very serious, and though it was quieted somewhat quickly the rising was ominous. It was clear that if left to the clergy and people the principles of reform would make little headway, and that the vast body of the clergy and people of the Church of England were thoroughly Romish. They evidently saw with a clear eye the way things were going, and though the king and the bishop might assure them that there was no departure in the Ten Articles from the "Catholic" religion, the very attempt to set forth doctrine without the authority of the Pope, and to tamper with the long-taught Articles of "Catholic" teaching was to their mind sacrilege. If they had no other effect, the Ten Articles served to show men at this early stage of the Church Reformation in England what the teaching and doctrine of the Church of England was in the year 1536, and how thoroughly averse even to small and comparatively trivial doctrinal changes the mass of English Churchmen were.

In another way, however, they helped unquestionably to further the reformers' cause. They were the direct cause of two other works of importance; the publication of a doctrinal thesis called the Institution of a Christian man, or the Bishops' Book, and the Injunctions of 1538.

The Bishops' Book, or the Institution, was the first attempt to put into set official form the distinct

teaching of the Church of England. In this way it was a kind of precursor of our Thirty-nine Articles.

In 1537 Cromwell organised a gathering of the bishops, with the object of supplementing in a formal and authoritative manner the doctrine of the Ten Articles, and with an eye to reform, managed to get a hearing for a Scotch Protestant named Aless or Allen, who advocated the principles of the Reformation with considerable force (Fox, p. 580). Cranmer, too, came out clearly, and in almost the language of the teaching of the Church of England now in Art. xxv. declared that confirmation and orders and other commonly called sacraments ought not to be called *sacraments*, or compared with Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. The Romish party violently objected to this, whereon Bishop Fox of Hereford spoke out and said that it was vain to resist the advance of the light of the Gospel; that the Scriptures were now abroad and in the hands of the people; that men and women were beginning to wonder at the blunders and falsehood of the past; concluding with the noble and memorable words: "Truth is the daughter of "time, and time is the mother of truth, and whatsoever "is besieged of truth cannot long continue, and upon "whose side truth doth stand, that ought not to be "thought transitory, or that it will ever fall."

The result of this meeting was a committee to compile a manual of faith, and in a short time the manual itself, known as the "Institution of a Christian man," came forth.* It was a fairly large book and contained

* It was called generally the Bishops' Book, because beyond the fact of its issuing from the press of the king's printer it had no claim to royal authority. It differed, too, from the Ten Articles and the "Necessary Doctrine" in not having the approval of Convocation.

an exposition of the Creed, the Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, and Justification and Purgatory. As to its teaching it was very complex; definite chiefly in its indefiniteness. It was neither purely "Catholic" nor wholly Romish; being partly evangelical and partly Popish. From the Romish standpoint some of it was very good, and some of it was very bad; and from the Reformation standpoint some of it was very good and some of it was very bad. There were seven sacraments according to the Romish teaching, though four of them were said to be of inferior necessity. Saint worship was left out, but the merit of saints was brought in. The teaching with regard to the episcopate would have shocked a modern "Catholic," for the episcopal office is regarded as a mere grade of the priestly or presbyterial, there being but two orders of ministers in Scripture, priests (presbyters) *or* bishops, and deacons; a very strong blow, whether they knew it or not, at the Romish doctrine of apostolical succession. With the teaching on justification and purgatory on the other hand, the modern "Catholic" would be fairly well pleased. And so all through. Here there was a bit of pure Romanism, there another part with a strong Protestant ring. It was simply an echo of the divided theological sentiment in the Church of the day.

But there was one Article that was so directly opposed to the Church teaching of the medieval epoch, and so distinctly an anticipation of the formulated teaching of the Church of England in the seventeenth and nineteenth Articles, that it deserves the closest attention. It was the part about the Catholic Church, and was evidently Cranmer's work. The king and the Romanists either did not notice it or

did not take in its real meaning. (Cranmer, Park. Soc., ii. 337.) A quotation will be of interest to the reader.

It is taken from the first part, which contains the interpretation of the creed, giving in the first person a Churchman's views on the very vital question of the scope and essence of Christ's Catholic Church. "I believe," he is represented as saying, "I believe that these *particular* Churches, in what place of the world soever they be congregated, be the very parts, portions or members of the Catholic and Universal Church. And that between them there is indeed no difference in superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, neither that any one of them is head or sovereign over the other; but that they be all equal in power and dignity, and be all grounded and builded upon one foundation. . . . And therefore *I do believe that the Church of Rome is not, nor cannot worthily be called the Catholic Church*, but only a particular member thereof, and cannot challenge or vindicate of right, and by the Word of God to be head of this Universal Church, or to have any superiority over the other Churches of Christ which be in England, France, Spain, or in any other realm, but that they be all free from any subjection unto the said Church of Rome, or unto the minister or bishop of the same. . . . And that the unity of this one Catholic Church is a mere spiritual unity. . . . And therefore, although the said *particular Churches do much differ, and be discrepant the one from the other . . . in the divers using and observation of such* outward *rites, ceremonies, traditions*, and *ordinances* as be instituted by *their governors, and received and approved* among them; yet I believe assuredly, that the *unity of* this Catholic Church cannot therefore, or for that cause, be *anything hurted, impeached*, or

infringed in any point, but that all the said Churches do and shall continue still in the unity of this Catholic Church, notwithstanding any such diversity." (Institution, quoted pp. 79–81, The Doctrine of the Church of England, Rivingtons.)

From what we would call now the evangelical standpoint nothing could be clearer than the statement, "I do believe that the Church of Rome *is not nor cannot worthily be called the Catholic Church.*" And the declaration that the varieties of differences of the various Churches do not break the Catholic unity of Christ's Church must be regarded as a defiance not only of the Papacy, but of the Roman doctrine of the Church.

There were other words that even more strongly demonstrated the Scriptural and evangelical character of the work.

These were the definition of the word Catholic, the Church's answer to the important question of the essential nature of the Catholic Church. If it is not the Roman communion, what is it then?

The paraphrase of the ninth Article of the Creed on the Church gave the answer.

"I believe assuredly in my heart, therefore, and with my mouth I do profess, and acknowledge, that there is and hath been ever . . . one certain number, society, communion, or company *of the elect and faithful people* of God . . . and the members of the same be all those holy saints which be now in heaven, and also *all the faithful people of God* which be now on life, or . . . have lived, or shall live here in this world . . . and be ordained for their true faith, and obedience unto the will of God, to be saved. . . . And I believe assuredly that this congregation (*i.e.*, the great com-

pany of the *true* believers, the really faithful) is the Holy Catholic Church . . . the very mystical body of Christ."

"Yet I believe assuredly, that God will never utterly abject this holy Church, nor any of the members thereof."

"And I believe assuredly, that in this holy Church, and with the members of the same (so long as they be militant and living here in earth), *there hath been ever, and yet be, . . . mingled together an infinite number of the evil and wicked people, which, although they be indeed the very members of the congregation of the wicked*, and, as the Gospel calleth them, very weeds and chaff, evil fish and goats . . . ; yet forasmuch as they do live in the common society or company of those which be the *very* quick and *living* members of Christ's mystical body, and outwardly do profess, receive, and consent with them for a season in the doctrine of the Gospel, and in the right using of the Sacraments, yea and ofttimes be endued with right excellent gifts of the Holy Ghost, *they are to be accounted and reputed here in this world* to be in the number of the said very members of Christ's mystical body, so long as they be not by open sentence of excommunication precided and excluded from the same. Not because they be such members in very deed, but because the certain judgment and knowledge of that their state is by God's ordinance hidden." . . .

"And I believe that this Holy Church is Catholic, that is to say, it cannot be coarcted or restrained within the limits or bonds of any one town, city, province, region or country; but that it is dispersed and spread universally throughout all the whole world. Insomuch, that in what part soever of the world, . . .

be it in Africa, Asia, or Europe, there may be found any number of people . . . which do believe in one God the Father, Creator of all things, and in one Lord Jesu Christ His Son, and in one Holy Ghost, and do also profess and have all one faith, one hope, one charity, . . . and do all consent in the true interpretation of the same Scripture, and in the right use of the Sacraments of Christ; we may boldly pronounce and say, that there is this Holy Church." . . .

"And I believe also that . . . like as our Saviour Christ is one Person, and the only head of His mystical body, *so this whole Catholic Church*, Christ's mystical body, is but one body under this one head Christ. And that *the unity of this one Catholic Church is a mere spiritual unity*" (*Ibid.*, pp. 75–80).

A clearer expression of the present teaching of the Church of England could hardly be given.

The distinction between the Catholic Church *visible*, that is, all the baptized and professing members of the body of Christ's Church, and the Catholic Church mystical or *invisible*, that is, all the very living and real members of Christ, is as clear almost as in Hooker's incomparable exposition of the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church in the beginning of the third book of the Ecclesiastical Polity. In fact the whole question is admirably compressed in the opening words of the interpretation of the ninth Article of the creed:

"That this word *Church*, in Scripture, is taken sometimes generally for the whole congregation *of them that be christened, and profess Christ's Gospel:* and sometimes it is taken for the catholic congregation, or number of them only which be *chosen, called,*

and *ordained* to reign with *Christ in everlasting life*" (*Ibid.*, p. 63).

Now, remember this was in 1537.

The present teaching of the Church of England on the subject of the Catholic Church, is of course identical with this. The prayer for all sorts and conditions of men, the preface to the prayer for the Church militant, and the second post-communion prayer, combined with the nineteenth Article, show that the doctrine of the Church of England now is, that the term Catholic Church is to be used in two senses, expressing in one sense the *visible* Church, the whole congregation of the baptized, that is, of all who profess and call themselves Christians, Christ's Church militant here on earth; and in the other sense, the mystical Church (or invisible), the blessed company of them only which be the very living members of His Body, those that are *inwardly* and *spiritually* renewed.

But here we have this Scriptural and simple evangelical teaching in the midst of a lump of half-Popish and wholly Popish, semi-Catholic and half-Protestant opinions in the year 1537, at a time when Cranmer himself was still holding the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation.

On the one hand, it only shows how complex the views of the Reformers themselves were, and how in some matters they were being enlightened with far greater clearness than in others; and on the other hand, that the Romish party were either blind to the trend of the reforming opinions, or else that they were incapable of stemming the advancing tide. The haste with which the book was completed, and the absorption of the king in affairs of state, may perhaps explain this anomaly.

In spite of its complexity however, the book was a real contribution to the cause of Reform, and many of the bishops directed their clergy to read part of it every Sunday to the people. This in itself was a great thing, and the fact that it was licensed by the king, gave it additional authority.

In the following year, the year 1538, another publication appeared which materially advanced the cause of reform; a series of orders from the king to the clergy, telling them what they were to do with the minuteness and authority of a Papal decree.

These were known as the king's Injunctions.

They were very peremptory, and there could be no mistake as to their meaning, and theological drift. They were Protestant to a degree. Canon Perry describes them as representing the extreme point reached by the Reformation throughout the reign of Henry VIII. Certainly they were anti-Roman in tone, and contributed in no small measure to develop the elements of Protestant independence of Papal uses, if not of decidedly evangelical doctrine. It was not that they taught any doctrine exactly. They were not articles of doctrine. But they set free ideas and principles which were bound sooner or later to undermine the influence of Rome, and the popular veneration of Romanism. Their effect was inevitable. They tended to loosen the fetters of traditionalism, and dissolve the glamour of Papal deliverances.

Churchmen now learned with amazement that the rule of Rome, so long the rule of the Church of England, was to be taken as the rule of the English Church no longer; that things prohibited by ban and burning, were now permitted and

encouraged; that time-honoured Church practices were superstitions, and that practices popularly supposed to be fit only for Gospellers and Lollardites, were to be observed and honoured by all good Church people. It seemed but a few days since the king and the bishops and the clergy were denouncing the Bible, and burning its readers. Now they use all their powers to induce the people to read it. Only the other day, as it were, the men who objected to images and relics were persecuted as the enemies of Holy Mother Church. But now all good Churchmen are bade to beware of images and relics, and to regard their veneration as idolatry. Truly, the times must have seemed out of joint, and the opposers of the new movement like unto them that dream.

A reference to two or three of the Injunctions will give the reader an idea of their character. In one of these Injunctions of 1538, the great Magna Charta of the Church of the Reformation as set forth in the sixth Article was for the first time set forth in the Church of England; that is, the Bible in English, and every Churchman's right to read it.

"Ye shall provide . . . one book of the whole Bible of the largest volume in English, and set up the same in some convenient place within the church . . . where your parishioners may most conveniently resort to the same and read it."

"Ye shall also discourage no man privily, nor openly from the reading or hearing of the said Bible, but shall expressly provoke, stir and exhort *every* person to read the same, as that which is the very lively Word of God, that every Christian person is bound to embrace, believe and follow, if he look to be saved" (Fox, p. 552).

The efforts of the Church of Rome to keep the Bible away from the people, and prevent their reading it, are too notorious to require insertion here. Rome feared and hated the popularizing of the Bible. It was only twelve years before this, in 1526, that the New Testament in English was prohibited in every diocese of the Church of England, and little more than two years before that Stokesley, the Bishop of London, had stated that to give the people liberty to read the Scriptures simply meant to infect them with heresy.

Now, by the authority of the supreme earthly head of the Church himself, the clergy are ordered not only to provide a Bible, and discourage no one from reading it, but expressly *to stir up and advise every person to read it.*

It was certainly a sign of the decided, even if premature, emancipation of the Church from the principles of Popery, for such a thing could never have proceeded from an agent of Rome. When Gardiner got the upper hand in 1543, all was changed.

Another great Church of England principle was stimulated in these Injunctions; the repetition of parts of the Church service in English. The clergy were ordered to repeat to their parishioners several times over, some portion of the Paternoster, Creed, or Ten Commandments, in English and explain them.

"You shall every Sunday and holy day through the year openly and plainly recite to your parishioners . . . one article or sentence of the Lord's prayer or creed in English, to the intent that they may learn the same by heart . . . till they have learned the whole Lord's prayer and creed in English by rote; and . . . you shall expound and declare the understanding of the same unto them."

"You shall declare to them that every Christian person ought to know the same before they should receive the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, and admonish them to learn the same more perfectly . . . or else that they ought not to presume to come to God's board."

In after years, this great principle of the Reformation became in the Church of England a great instrument for the destruction of Romanism. It destroyed in the popular idea the ecclesiastical use of Latin as the means of worship, and in destroying this displaced much of the superstition that was associated with it.

Another important fact was that a less Romish view of worship generally was set forth in them. All images that had been abused by pilgrimages and offerings, or by having any candles set before them, were to be taken down.

Images and relics were not to be kissed or licked. The formal saying of beads was to be discouraged.

"You shall exhort your hearers not to repose their trust or affiance in other works devised by men's fancies besides the Scriptures; as in wandering to pilgrimages, offering of money, candles, or tapers to feigned relics, or images, or kissing, or licking the same, saying over a number of beads, or such like superstition." "You shall suffer from henceforth no candles, tapers, or images of wax, to be set before any image or picture." . . . "If you have heretofore declared to your parishioners anything to the extolling or setting forth of pilgrimages to feigned relics or images, or any such superstition, you shall now openly before the same recant and reprove the same, showing them, as the truth is, that you did the same upon no ground of Scripture."

And in addition to all this, the preaching of a Gospel sermon at least once a-quarter, was enjoined upon all the clergy.

"You shall make . . . one sermon every quarter of a year at the least, wherein you shall purely and sincerely declare the very *Gospel of Christ*, and in the same exhort your hearers to the works of charity, mercy, and faith, . . . and not to repose their trust or affiance in other works devised by men's fancies."

One can thus see at a glance that the Injunctions were of a decidedly Protestant character, and indicated a very strong advance on the part of the Church in the direction of the Reformation.

No better proof of this could be given than the way in which they were received by the Romish party. The clergy as a whole simply hated them. If they had dared, they would not have read them at all. But they feared the king with a great and terrible dread, and complied. Their independence had been ground out of them. As Green says, they were to learn to regard themselves as mere mouthpieces of the royal will.

They did their best, however, to prevent the people either hearing or understanding, "hemming and hacking the Word of God, and such our injunctions," and read them so quickly, or mumbled their words so, that no one could catch what they said. It was an old trick this of monks and priests,* and is not

* "And that popery may not be lost, the mass-priests, although they are compelled to discontinue the use of the Latin language, yet most carefully observe the same tone and manner of chanting to which they were heretofore accustomed in the papacy."—*Hooper to Bullinger* (Orig. Lett., Park. Soc., p. 72).

unknown to-day. But the king and Cromwell were not easily befooled.

A sharp letter was sent, in the king's name, to the Justices of the Peace throughout the land telling them in language at once quaint and forcible to have an eye to the clergy.

"Wherefore we desire and pray you, and nevertheless straitly charge and command you . . . to inquire and fynde out such canker'd parsons, vicars and curats, which do not truely and substantially declare our said injunctions, and the very word of God, but momble confusely, saying that they be compelled to rede them, and byd their parishioners nevertheless to do as they did in time past, to live as their fathers, and that *the old fashion is the best, and* other *craftie, sedicious parables.*"

No one could mistake the meaning of a letter like that. It simply meant that the reforms which had been begun were to be carried out, and that there was to be no evasion. Though the letter was in the name of the king, there seems to be little doubt that it came from the man who at that time was the ecclesiastical dictator of England. The voice was Henry's voice, but the hand was the hand of Cromwell.*

And so, little by little, or rather with leaps and bounds, the Church is moving in the reformed direction. The monasteries have fallen. The popular supremacy of a great ultramontane body has been destroyed. The idea of the Papal infallibility has been exploded. The dictatorship of the Pope in matters of doctrine has been broken. The initial

* The letter is given at length in Burnet's "Records," Part 3, Book iii., Number 63.

principle of the reformed doctrine has been accepted. Independent articles of faith have been promulgated. Roman practices have been abolished. Evangelical theories have been set forth by authority as the teaching of the Church. The Bible has been opened to the people, and its reading insisted on. Error has been exposed; ignorance corrected; Popish customs rejected; a simpler worship attained.

As one ardent Church writer expressed it: "The king did more good for the advancing of Christ's Kingdom and religion in England in three years, than the Pope had done in the previous three hundred." Whether all will agree with that statement or not, it is certain that King Henry VIII. drew the Church of England away from Rome to a degree that no one would have dreamed of ten years before. The abolition of the supremacy made a wide breach. But, by these subsequent movements, a great gulf was fixed that could not be passed over.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE *VIA MEDIA*.

The Church yet far from being reformed—The Church during this reign, largely what the king was—The influence of Cromwell and Cranmer upon Henry—The character of Cromwell—Cranmer's patience and purpose—The Conference with the Lutheran divines—The vexation of the king—The ascendency of Gardiner and the six Articles—Their teaching the formal teaching of the Church of England then—Their effect, healthy though painful—The "Necessary Erudition"—The fall of Cromwell—Its cause and effects—The course of Church events, from 1540 to the end of Henry's reign—The character and conduct of Cranmer—The difficulties he had to encounter—Three important ways in which he helped forward the Reformation during Henry's last years—The Bible kept for the people—The practice of preaching in the church authorized—Prayers in English—The king's esteem for Cranmer—Henry's death, 1547—A reign of contradictions—The precise position of the Church of England at the end of Henry's reign—The Church half-Roman, and half-Protestant, and in the *Via Media Anglicana*—The conclusion of the whole matter—The principles that afterwards became the principles of the Church of England asserted in embryo.

AS we saw in the last chapter the movement of the Church from 1535 to 1538 was very marked. It was one of steady advance towards Protestantism, and of steady retrogression from Rome. And here a question arises, the answer to which will determine more clearly the precise situation at this very critical epoch.

LXXVII. *Was the Church of England now committed to the principles of the Reformation? and did all these various steps in the way of reform prove her to have become what might be termed a Protestant and an Evangelical Church?*

No.

The Church was by no means yet reformed. The leaven was at work. The leaders of the cause were growing in light and conviction. The people were beginning to wake up. The schoolmaster was abroad. "The battle between ignorance and intelligence had begun." The night of medievalism was ending. The dawn of new ideas, larger views, truer thoughts, was breaking. The young men of the age were stirring. The work of Erasmus and Colet and Warham was bearing fruit, though perhaps not the fruit they expected. Theories and principles had been accepted by the Church, which a few years before were called heresy, and brought men to the stake. The advance was great. It was the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our eyes.

Yet for all this, the Church of England in the year of grace, 1538, was far from being reformed. Much remained to conquer still.

In fact, the Church history of this period may be fairly epitomized in the statement that all through the reign of Henry VIII. the Church of England was largely what the king was. Its doctrine was his doctrine. Its position was his position.

It was Protestant, mainly because he defied the Pope, and like all Englishmen, hated foreign interference. And as far as it was Protestant in doctrine, it was mainly so because he chose to cull out the weeds in his own Church garden through hatred of the Pope, and promote reforms after his own caprice in his own ecclesiastical household.

At the same time, however, another very important matter must be taken into consideration, and that is, the political and ecclesiastical influence of his chief advisers. Nearly all of the king's work in the way of

real Church reform, is to be explained by the powerful personal influence of Cromwell and Cranmer. Thomas Cromwell, the king's Vice-gerent, Vicar-general, and chief adviser, and Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury (1532-1556), the one a layman, the other a clergyman, were throughout the unwearied friends of the principles of the Reformation; and nearly all the important spiritual elements of the Reformation in Henry's reign, are directly attributable to one or other of these two men. Cranmer and Cromwell were not always spotless. They were not always infallible. They were men, "and had mixtures of fear and human infirmities." But they were both inspired by a hatred of Romish falsities; Cranmer deeply, and if Fox is to be trusted, Cromwell sincerely; and both employed their powers with persistent energy, to advance the principles of reform. Where they could, they gained a point. Where they were baffled, they waited on time.

It was the influence of Cromwell that first awakened in King Henry the idea, that a Pope-ruled people and a Rome-ruled clergy were but half-ruled people and half-hearted clergy. It was Cromwell's antipathy as a layman to the irregularities of the clergy, and the hollowness of the Romish rites, that was the means of so strongly arousing the opposition of the king to these things. It is true that Cromwell loved power. It is probable that he derived personal advantage from the downfall of the monks. Certainly, like his great namesake in after years, he was a strenuous man, and of imperious will. But in spite of all the aspersions of his foes, he was throughout a strong and earnest foe of Pope and Popery, and, in

accordance with his light, a stern and loyal English Churchman. (A fair estimate of Cromwell will be found in Burnet's "Reformation," i. 440.*)

The influence of Archbishop Cranmer, on the other hand, was that of a scholar and a divine. Gradually, even timidly, he was grasping the salient elements of the reformed theology, and with the dogged resolve of an Englishman, was furthering their spread. It was to him chiefly that we owe, as English Churchmen, our English Bible. It was his influence mainly, that caused the king's interest in the Continental Reformers. It is Cranmer mainly, if not chiefly, we have to thank as English Churchmen for the liturgical reform which culminated in our incomparable liturgy. In season and out of season, "unresting yet unhasting," these two men with all the force of influence at their command, in face of a tremendous and resolved majority, were advancing in every way the cause of reform.

And yet after all, they advanced it only as far as the king let them. If Henry VIII. had thought to say it, he might have said of the religious reforms of his reign with not a little truth, "La Reformation, c'est moi!"

Prelates, clergy, convocations, parliaments, all did what he wanted. If he desired a certain doctrine to be declared the doctrine of the English Church, they declared it. If he wanted a protest against the Pope, they made it. If he wished a clause, they

* It is notorious that Romanists have defamed Cromwell's character in every possible way, and it is not a little significant that some Church of England writers have taken their side. Hore describes Cromwell as "a bitter foe *to the Church.*" He was indeed; *to the Church of Rome!*

inserted it. If he willed the succession to be altered, they altered it. When in effect, King Henry said, "Thy wills and actions are mine, thy canons also and thy laws, all their provisions are mine;" the commons and the clergy answered to a man as servile Ahab of old, "My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have." It is this fact that explains so much of what has been done, and of what is to follow in the history of the Church of England, during the reign of King Henry VIII.

Now, up to the year 1538, the king was practically in accord with Cromwell and Cranmer; and it was owing to this in the providence of God that the Church of England assumed *as a Church* such a Protestant position.

For the influence of these advocates of reform accorded well with the two main traits in Henry's character. He was a manly, independent Englishman. The forceful blood of the free Saxon mingled in his veins with that of the imperious Norman. He was a bold, bluff, free-spoken man. And he was a king. This was the natural force which was used in the providence of God to bring about the anti-Papal standing of England's Apostolic Church.

Then, too, he was a layman. And like most laymen he disliked ecclesiasticism. Priestcraft disgusted him. He detested clerical pretensions, just as heartily as he detested Papal claims. The confessional system, with its abuses and interferences, had somewhat the same effect upon Henry that monkish profligacy had upon Erasmus.

And so it came to pass in the strange ways of God that the complex and even inconsistent characteristics

of one strong man shaped the fortune and history of a great national Church, and made the Church of England what it was in Henry's reign; Protestant yet not Evangelical, anti-Papal yet not reformed. In the modern sense, Henry the Eighth was never an evangelical Protestant. Even at the time of the Ten Articles and the last Injunctions, he was doctrinally a Papist. As a man with strong personality he had simply struck out on the path of ecclesiastical reform, in the firm conviction that what he had already done and was doing, had neither committed himself nor the Church of England to a departure in any essential degree from the Catholic religion.

Verily we ought, as Bishop Burnet said, to "adore and admire the paths of the Divine wisdom, that brought about such a change in a church, which, being subjected to the see of Rome, had been *more than any other part of Europe* most tame under its oppressions, and was most deeply drenched in superstition: and this by the means of a Prince, who was *the most devoted to the interest of Rome of any in Christendom, . . . and continued to the last much leavened with superstition*" (Burnet, Preface, "History of the Reformation," xxii. The italics are mine.).

LXXVIII. *When we say then that the Church of England as a Church assumed a Protestant position, we simply mean that it went as far and no further than the will of the king?*

Yes.

History is the story of the operation of influence. All great movements as a rule are simply the story of the influence of one or two strong men. The names of Hildebrand, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, are sufficient in proof. With regard to the Church of England, it

was especially the case on account of Henry's official position as supreme head of the Church on earth. Without a clear grasp of this fact it will be impossible for the student of English ecclesiastical history to understand the events of Henry's reign, especially those of the latter part.

For from the year 1538 to the death of the king in 1547, the cause of reform had a checkered career. In some ways it went backwards. At one time, indeed, it went back so far that it seemed as if the Church of England was about to revert to its Popish position in the medieval days. There were one or two forward movements toward the end, and throughout the reign there was a gradual instilment of reformation ideas into the minds of the people at large. The fire that was kindled was not put out. It smouldered and spread. But outwardly at least, and to human appearance, after 1538, the reforming cause was at a disadvantage, and the old or Popish party got the upper hand. They could not bring the Church back again to Rome. Things had gone too far for that. To re-Romanize the Church of England was out of the question. The days of profligate friars, and shameless monks, and winking images, and terrorizing edicts were over. But from this time on there was no little reaction in the Roman direction, and the explanation is simple.

The reason was the will of the king.

Always capricious, and fitful as a spoiled child, it was difficult to predict at any time the view he would take of any important question, or what person or party he would favour, and it happened that about this time a change came over the temper of the king.

For some time past the minds of reforming Church-

men, and even of Henry himself, had been turned sympathetically in the direction of the German reformers. They felt that they were engaged in the same great work, notwithstanding differences of detail, and overtures were made for closer union and co-operation. (A full account of these negotiations is given in Hardwick's "History of the Articles," pp. 52–57.) It was felt that a friendly conference with regard to the points of doctrine on which they were agreed as Protestants, would tend to unite them "in one common expression and harmony of faith and doctrine drawn up out of the pure Word of God." Accordingly in the summer of 1538 the matter was consummated, and Cranmer and Cromwell arranged that a deputation of Lutheran divines should come over to England (Cranmer, "Letters," Park. Soc., p. 377).

It certainly was thought that the time was ripe for this, and the effort was carefully planned. At any rate, partly owing to the influence of Archbishop Cranmer, and partly as a matter of State policy, they came over at the king's invitation, and in the preliminary conferences all went happily, and a good broad platform of sound doctrine was mutually agreed to and adopted. They came to an agreement in the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and put their Articles in writing.*

* These Articles are given in full in Cranmer's "Letters," Park. Soc., pp. 472–480. They are of very great importance to the student of English Church History, as they furnish a very important clue to the meaning of some of the thirty-nine Articles. Article 5, De Ecclesia, throws not a little light upon the present teaching of the Church of England in the 19th Article (in spite of the strange assertion of Hardwick that no trace of it exists in it), and clearly explains the meaning of the expression, the *visible Church*.

Then unfortunately there came a break.

As long as the conference stuck to plain matters of doctrine all went smoothly enough. But the German section was not content with this. They were longing to discuss the Popish abuses. In his message to them, the king had spoken of "his propension of mind towards the Word of God, and of his desire to wholly take away and abolish the impious *ceremonies* of the Bishop of Rome." It is hardly to be wondered at, therefore, that they were urgent to get from Henry a declaration against such Romish abuses as the communion in one kind, private masses, and the celibacy of the clergy. In a long Latin letter they earnestly besought the king to consider and to abolish in the realm of England these three most serious obstacles to the abolition of pontifical idolatry and the completeness of pure religion, namely, the prohibition of the reception of both the species of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, the celebration of private masses, and the prevention of the marrying of priests. They showed both from reason and from the Word of God that these doctrines were untenable. They pointed out that Christ expressly commanded all to drink of the cup, and that He never ordered the laity only to eat the body, and the clergy to receive the other species; that the arguments commonly employed by Romanists with regard to the danger of spilling the cup and so on were utterly worthless; and that both in the early Church, as Jerome and Gelasius showed, and in the Greek Church at the present time, the withholding of the cup from the laity was unknown. They then showed that the doctrine of private masses not only did away with the propitiatory work of Christ, but introduced idolatry. It

was a doctrine that destroyed justification by faith, contradicted Scripture, and was unknown in the Christian Church before the days of Gregory. At great length, with masterly logic and copious learning, they exposed the novelty and unscripturalness of the teaching of the Roman Church on the subject. They then took up the subject of the marriage of priests, asserting that the Bishop of Rome had prohibited it, contrary to the Scripture, contrary to the laws of nature, and contrary to all honesty, as it had been the occasion of much crime and wickedness. Scripture and ancient custom and reason were again referred to. The letter concluded with an earnest hope that the cause of the Gospel would spread more and more, and a fervent prayer for the king, and was signed by the three German delegates, under date of the 5th of August, 1538, Francis Burgart, George a Boyneburgh, and Frederic Myconius.*

The language of the letter was so respectful, the arguments it contained so cogent, and the object of it so thoroughly in accord with the purpose of their visit, that it was most natural to expect that the king would cordially acquiesce in their proposals.

But contrary to expectation this was not the case.

Whether it was that the action of the German envoys was somewhat premature, and its method perhaps ill-advised, or that the Romish party discerned in it a vantage point of opportunity, it is certain that the overture produced the very opposite effect from what was intended. The king assumed a most stubborn attitude. He refused to bend in the slight-

* The letter is given in full (in Latin) by Burnet in the Addenda, together with the king's answer (vol. i., part ii., pp. 493–538).

est particular, and the conference ended with little being gained for the Reform side, and much being gained by the Romanists.

It is possible that the action of the Lutherans tended only to arouse Henry's opposition, for though he was a man readily open to influence, he was the last man in the world to be driven. It is more than probable that the whispers of the Romish bishops had led him to regard their interference in ceremonial matters in the light of impertinent meddling, and had suggested the advantage of his disavowing any connection with the more Protestant views of the Sacramentarians. It is certain that the Romanists had much to do with the reply, for the king's answer was drawn up by the king in co-operation with one of the prelates of the Romish party, Bishop Tonstal, and contains the skilfully contrived reasonings of a trained Romanist. It opened with a succession of honeyed blandishments, and lauded them for their excellent intentions and religious zeal; but when it came to the abuses they had complained of, it defended them with the trite arguments of the Romish Church, and maintained them with the most stubborn earnestness.

In one word, the concord was broken. The king assumed an attitude of antagonism. The bishops declined any further meddling with the abuses on account of "the book that had been devised by the king's majesty," and Cranmer expressed his disappointment in a letter to Cromwell. "I perceive that the bishops seek only an occasion to break the concord" (Cranmer, "Letters," Park. Soc., 379).

The changed temper of the king speedily showed itself in the very serious changes that came over the Church. The celibacy of the clergy was again enforced.

A clergyman of the name of Lambert (or Nicholson), a Cambridge man, who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth by Bilney, was burned as a heretic at Smithfield. The main charge against Lambert was his denial of the corporal presence in the sacrament, and of the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation. He was tried in person by the king, under circumstances that marvellously remind one of the historic appearance of Luther at the Diet of Worms, and after maintaining his cause with remarkable vigour against Cranmer, Tonstal, and a number of the bishops, he was condemned to die by the king, and his sentence was read by Cromwell. As we stated before in the case of Sawtre and Frith, the views for which Lambert was burned by the Church of England in 1538 are now the teaching of the Church of England in the post-communion rubric, and the twenty-eighth Article.* Cranmer's part

* The language of Lambert, as quoted by Fox, was as follows:—

"It is not agreeable to a natural body to be in two places or more at one time; wherefore it must follow of necessity, that either Christ had not a natural body; or else truly according to the common nature of a body, it cannot be present in two places at once; and much less in many, that is to say in heaven, and in earth, on the right hand of the Father, and in the Sacrament."

The teaching of the Church of England in the Prayer-Book is:—

"The natural Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ are in Heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural Body to be at one time in more places than one." Nor was Canon Perry exactly fair in his representation of the Zwinglianism of Lambert's teaching (ii. 156, 157). Lambert's doctrine was the denial of a corporal presence. But he added: "I acknowledge and confess that the holy Sacrament of Christ's body and blood is the very body and blood, in a certain manner." The Church of England doctrine is precisely the same. It teaches that this certain manner is *heavenly* and *spiritual*, that is not carnal and corporal; "only after an *heavenly and spiritual manner*" (Article xxviii.).

in this sad transaction brings to our mind Acts xxvi. 10.

Many Romish ceremonies were brought in again to the great satisfaction of the anti-Reform party; and by a royal proclamation, candles, and crosses, and processions, and holy bread and holy water, and a number of Romish ceremonies were to be observed once more. And then followed the passing of the Six Articles, the high-water mark of the anti-Protestant reaction of the reign of Henry VIII.

The explanation of this strange reaction is to be found in the growing influence of the ablest man in the Romish party over the king, and to the fact that at about this time the capricious king seems to have cooled towards Cromwell, and to have warmed towards Bishop Gardiner.

Gardiner was a very clever man. Wily, insinuating, a trained diplomatist, a master of finesse, skilled in the art of intrigue, he knew how to awaken a prejudice by a whisper, and stiffen an antipathy by an insinuation. His three years' residence in France had perfected his craft without decreasing his zeal. And from the time of his return, the main object of his life seems to have been to get influence over the king, and through the king to bring back the Church of England to the old Romish position. He was a thorough Romanist and an unwearying foe of the principles of the Reformation.

No man saw more clearly than Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, the drift and issue of the movements of the time. The sweeping out of the Pope and the monks was only the outward and visible sign of the sweeping away of the "Catholic" religion; that is, the religion of Rome. If he was by training a man of the time, he was by conviction a

medievalist. To him the only religion was the old religion. The Church was in danger; that is, the Church of Rome, and the Romish religion; and the inevitable result to his mind of the adoption of the principles of reform was not only the casting out of the Pope from England, but the rejection of the Roman religion by the Church of England.

Gardiner did his work well.

Improving every opportunity, and making capital out of each most trivial advantage, he gained the interest of the king. Suspicion is the shadow of slander. And (as Fox shows so clearly), the whole bearing of the king towards the Reformers and their cause began to show signs of change. We have seen how that change manifested itself in the case of the Lutherans. We shall presently see how it showed itself in his attitude to Cromwell. All Church historians seem to agree that in some way Gardiner had to do with the attainder and beheading of Cromwell, a man who, for all his faults, was the most powerful friend of the reforming movement in the Church of England in Henry's reign.*

It showed itself most plainly of all in his securing the adoption of the Romish Six Articles in 1539.

It has been suggested by Canon Perry (ii. 164) that there is a connection between the visit of the Lutheran divines and the passage of the Six Articles. It is not improbable. It is more than likely that there might be rankling in the mind of a man like Henry no little resentment against both them and their friends. The monarch who had sent the Pope

* The chief and principal enemy against him was Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester (Fox, viii. 582).

about his business would hardly be dictated to by three German Sacramentarians. And Gardiner, too, was very likely to foment and encourage such feelings by insinuations and suggestions that the king should show men that he was not going to be instructed in the principles of the Catholic religion by sectaries, and that he should let the world know that the Defensor Fidei was still a foe to all heresies.

At this time, moreover, the political affairs of the nation were peculiarly calculated to favour the bias of prejudice in the royal mind. Matters were becoming very stormy in England. The innovations in religion had caused a stir like that in Ephesus when the Word of God so mightily prevailed. There were whispers of revolt. There were wars religious, and rumours of war civil. There were fanatical excesses that no true Churchman would palliate. There were outbursts of Catholic zeal that foreboded ill for the Protestants. The Sacrament of the Mass was insulted with scurrilous indecency. Ecclesiastical tribunals were overawed by Protestant mobs (Froude, iii. 375–377 ; Green, ii. 186). And through it all, and taking advantage of all, Gardiner kept on working.

It was Gardiner who suggested the idea of the Articles as a remedy for the religious upheavings. It was Gardiner who hinted that the best policy for the hour was a sharp and short dealing with the innovators. It was Gardiner who advised that the king should plainly declare himself as opposed to all excesses in religion, and it was through Gardiner's crafty wit, as Fox says, that Lambert was condemned, and the king declared, "I will not be a patron to heretics."

"This wily Winchester, with his crafty assistants,

and also by other pestilent persuasions, ceased not to seek all means to overthrow religion. First, bringing the king, in hatred with the German princes, then putting him in fear of the emperor . . . and other foreign powers; but especially of civil tumults and commotions within his own kingdom; which above all things he most dreaded, by reason of these innovations of religion. . . . The bishop exhorted the king for his own safeguard, and tranquillity of his realm, to see how and by what policy so manifold mischiefs might be prevented. He suggested that no other way or shift could be better devised, than to shew himself sharp and severe against the new sectaries, the anabaptists, and sacramentarians (as they called them); and that he should set forth such articles, confirming the ancient catholic faith, as might recover his credit with christian princes, and that all the world might see and judge him to be a right and perfect catholic. By these and such suggestions the king was too much led away" (Fox, p. 568).

And so it came to pass that through the influence of this untiring man, and the strong personality of the dictatorial king, the Church of England once again accepted the substance of the Romish religion, and decreed as her distinct and definite and formulated teaching the body of doctrine incorporated in the Six Articles of 1539.

LXXIX. *Were the Six Articles then the formulated doctrine of the English Church?*

Yes.

It is most important to remember with regard to the Six Articles, *that they were the teaching of the Church of England.*

Each of their six points was affirmed in Convoca-

tion. They were passed by the Parliament of the realm. They were approved by the king. Thus they represented the united sentiment of the clergy and laity, and were *the formulated doctrine of the Church of England.*

It is important also to remember another point.

These Articles were not the doctrine of the Church of England *as part of the Church of Rome.* They would have been this ten years before. They were now the doctrine of the Church of England as a particular or national Church ("Institution of a Christian Man," 1537; *cf.* Art. xxxiv.). The occasion was a great one. Froude mentions as an evidence of its greatness that the two provinces were united into one; the Convocation of York held its session with the Convocation of Canterbury. A Synod of the whole English Church, thus solemnly convened, deliberately set forth as its distinctive teaching these Six Articles of faith for the unity and concord of all the king's subjects as members of the national Church.

With this in mind let the reader carefully consider the definite doctrine of the Church of England in the year 1539, as adopted in the month of June, 1539, by the king, the clergy, and the two Houses of Parliament.

The first Article declares:—

> "That in the most blessed sacrament of the altar by the strength and efficacy of Christ's mighty word (it being spoken by the priest) is present really, under the form of bread and wine, the natural body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, as conceived of the Virgin Mary; and after the consecration *there remains no substance of bread or wine, or any*

other substance, but the substance of Christ, God and man."

The second declares :—

"That the communion in both kinds is not necessary for salvation to all persons by the law of God ; and that it is to be believed, and not doubted of, but *that in the flesh, under form of bread, is the very blood,* and with the blood, under form of wine, is the very flesh as well separate as they were both together."

The third declares :—

"That priests, after the order of priesthood, may not marry by the law of God."

The fourth declares :—

"That the vows of chastity or widowhood, by man or woman made to God advisedly, ought to be observed by the law of God ; and that it exempteth them from other liberties of Christian people, which otherwise they might enjoy."

The fifth declares :—

"That it is meet and necessary that private masses be continued and admitted in this English church and congregation ; and in them good Christian people, ordering themselves accordingly, do receive both godly and goodly consolations and benefits ; and it is agreeable also to God's law."

The sixth declares :—

"That auricular confession was expedient and necessary, and ought to be retained and continued in the church of God" (Fox, p. 569).

This in plain simple language was the distinctive

Church teaching of the Church of England on some of the points that were then, and are now, of cardinal importance in determining the real position and standing of any particular branch of the Catholic Church of Christ.

The Six Articles were not indeed the whole teaching of the Church. But they were the teaching of the Church, as a Church, on at least two subjects that are the key-stones and corner-stones of the Romish religion—the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the efficacy of the priest-offered sacrifice. Archbishop Cranmer, in his latter days, when speaking of the Romish religion, said tersely, "What availeth it to take away beads, pardons, pilgrimages, and such other like Popery, so long as two chief roots remain unpulled up. . . . The rest is but leaves and branches. . . . *The very body of the tree*, or rather the roots of the weeds, is the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation, of the real presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament of the altar (as they call it), and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ made by the priest" (Cranmer, Works, Park. Soc., p. 6).

The Six Articles were not only set forth in a formulated manner as the distinctive Church teaching of the national Church; they were a formal declaration against the crime of heresy. And the declaration was worded in such a manner as to show beyond doubt that the chief feature of heresy still in the view of the pre-reformation Church of England was the denial of the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. Cranmer did all in his power to prevent the adoption of the penal clauses, but in vain. The influence of Gardiner prevailed even over the king. A set of uncompromising and blood-

thirsty penalties were passed, and it was enacted that all refusal to receive these doctrines was an offence against the law of the land. It was felony for an Englishman to refuse to go to confession, or receive the sacrament; it was felony to speak against the five last Articles, and death to deny the first. Truly, it was a most un-English and horrible proceeding. It is hard to believe that a body of Englishmen, in the year 1539, could ever have allowed it to pass.

But the point of importance to be noted here is this: that by this statute the Church of England put itself on record against *heresy* as a particular or national Church, and practically declared that the belief of a certain teaching on the subject of the sacrament was contrary to the doctrine, not of the Church of Rome, but of the *Church of England*, and worthy of death.

As the words of the Act throw a great light on the contrast between the teaching of the Church of England then and at present, it will be worth while to quote them from Fox's records:—

"If any person or persons within this realm of England, . . . should publish, preach, teach, say, affirm, declare, dispute, argue or hold, that *in* the blessed sacrament of the altar, under form of bread and wine (after the consecration thereof), there is not present really the natural body and blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, as conceived of the Virgin Mary; or that after the said consecration there remaineth any substance of the bread or wine, . . . or that in the flesh, under the form of bread is not the very blood of Christ, or that with the blood of Christ, under the form of wine, is not the very flesh of Christ . . . then every such person so offending, and their

abettors should be deemed and adjudged heretics, and every such offence should be adjudged as manifest heresy."

Nothing could be clearer than the meaning of this.

According to the Church of England, in the year 1539, the person who did not believe in transubstantiation, *was a heretic.*

And, according to the law of the realm of England, every person who did not accept what Cranmer afterwards called the very body of the tree of Popery, the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation, was as a heretic to be burned.

"And every such offender and offenders should therefore have and suffer judgment, execution, pain and pains of death by way of burning."

It seems to be convenient in these days, for certain churchmen to quickly pass by these obnoxious Articles, if not to apologize for them. The author of "The Doctrine of the Church of England" (Rivingtons), for instance, attempts with great ingenuity in the introduction of that work to show that the doctrine of the Church of England has been of continuous identity since the year 1536. It is evident that the writer's intention is to support the fallacious reasoning of a school which, under the specious plea of the continuity of the Church, would fain claim authority in these days for certain semi-Popish doctrines, which the Church of England has authoritatively renounced.

But the attempt is a futile one. The omission of all mention of the Six Articles by this writer seems to indicate the consciousness of a fatal gap in that theory.

In the light of ecclesiastical history the Six Articles

Bill is to be regarded as a touchstone of no mean value. It brings out into clear relief the difference between the past and present doctrine of the Church of England, and illustrates the fact that English Churchmen can best understand the doctrine of the Church of England at the present time, by understanding clearly the Church of England teaching in days when the errors of Popery were formally accepted as the authoritative doctrines of the Church of the realm.*

It is further to be remembered that the teaching of the Church of England on the subject of transubstantiation, or the sacrament of the altar, in the first of the Six Articles of 1539, had been the teaching of the Church of England for at least three hundred and twenty-one *years* before the adoption of the Ten Articles, that is, since the year 1215, when the Lateran Council, under Pope Innocent III., first promulgated the dogma of transubstantiation.

The statement of the learned Bishop Lloyd in his preface to his work, "The Formularies of Faith put forth by authority during the reign of Henry VIII." (Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 5), is worthy of a careful consideration. Bishop Lloyd deliberately states with regard to the Ten Articles of 1536, the Institution and the Erudition, that while "these documents are of great importance to all students who are anxious to study the rise and progress of the Protestant doctrines

* It is true that the Church of England may not have been specifically mentioned in the Six Articles Statute, or the independence or nationality of the English Church emphasized. But things and facts are greater than names. The facts are that the English Church was *at this time* severed from Roman jurisdiction, and though the Articles affirmed were the Church of Rome's teaching, they were affirmed by a body independent of Rome.

of the Church, *they carry no authority* along with them. Nothing," he says, "antecedent to the reign of Edward VI. has any title to that character." But they show how many of the tenets of Romanism once accepted by the Church, and commanded to be taught by her clergy, are now discarded as erroneous, and formally renounced as errors of Popery.

But to pass on. The influence of Gardiner and the Romish party reached its climax here. It could hardly be called a short-lived triumph, for the Articles remained as the standard of the teaching of the Church of England for some years after, though some of the severer penal clauses of the Act were modified in the following year, and also in 1543 and 1544. But the effect of that baneful influence, though painful, was healthy. It undoubtedly did much to open England's eyes. The mass of the people were still on the side of the old religion, for the conservative spirit of Englishmen was opposed to change in matters of religion; but when they saw some of the most spiritually-minded Churchmen of the day harried to prison, and others burned at the stake, and some of the best friends of the Church driven out of the country, their faith in such proceedings was shaken.

For the state of religion was complex beyond belief. Like two great surging tides of battle, the old and the new opinions were contending for victory. The forces of Rome headed by Gardiner, and the forces of Reform headed by Cromwell and Cranmer, were now divided in irreconcilable opposition. One party or the other must have the supremacy. Compromise was impossible. One day Gardiner preaches a sermon that is Popish to the core. The next day Barnes preaches a sermon that delights the Protestants.

"The bishops are divided and hate one another. The people know not what to believe, for those who are inclined to the reformed view are called heretics; those who adhere to the old faith are charged with Papistry and treason."

At one time it seemed as if the power of Cromwell would override all, and that Gardiner himself would be brought to the ground. In the first week of June, in the year 1540, the world might well have believed that Gardiner's end was near. The political probabilities all pointed to the triumph of his great antagonist. Instead of that, however, with a suddenness as startling as it was unexpected, Cromwell himself fell down. "No cloud," says Froude, "was visible in the clear sky of his prosperity; when the moment came, he fell suddenly as if struck by lightning on the very height and pinnacle of his power." The fall of Cromwell, while it was as abrupt and startling as that of Wolsey, was as irretrievable. Like his old master he fell, and like him he fell never to hope again.

At three o'clock on the afternoon of the 10th of June, he was arrested by the Duke of Norfolk as he sat at the table of the Privy Council, was conducted to the Tower, was attainted by Parliament for interfering with the king's authority and abetting heresy, and on the 28th of July was beheaded on the scaffold. Ostensibly the cause of Cromwell's fall was treason, and its occasion the blunder of suggesting the name of Anne of Cleves; really and truly it was his anti-Romanism. The very letters to the ambassadors at foreign courts, which were written off at once by the king's request, declared that the head and front of Cromwell's offending were his indefatigable efforts on

behalf of the Protestant opinions; and four out of the eight articles of his attainder were complaints of his endeavours to establish the principles of reform.* That his fall was deemed a triumph for the Roman parties, and that he was regarded as the strongest prop of the Protestant party, cannot be seriously disputed. But that his death was a gain to the interests of the Church, as Canon Perry states, and that he would, had his power continued, "have linked the reforming movement to *the erratic* proceedings of the foreign reformers," can hardly be considered as a just and fair statement from the present Church of England standpoint. For however we may deprecate the imperiousness of Cromwell's methods, we must not allow ourselves to forget that the Church of England now teaches as its formulated and authoritative *Church* teaching a body of doctrines well in advance, so far as Protestant evangelicalism is concerned, of anything Cromwell looked to. The Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-nine Articles are proofs of this.

LXXX. *Was the downfall of Cromwell then a destructive blow to the party of reform? Did it retard in any serious measure the reformation of the Church?*

The fall of Cromwell affected the reformed cause less than might have been supposed.

* The third article alleged that, being a detestable heretic and disposed to set and sow common sedition and variance among the people, he had dispersed into all parts of the realm a great number of false and erroneous books, disturbing the faith of the king's subjects on the nature of the Eucharist. In other words, he had made efforts to oppose the teaching of transubstantiation, the denial of which was then the head and front of all heresy. The fourth article charged him with releasing heretics from prison. That is of releasing Protestants. The fifth article alleged that he had protected heretics, and "terribly rebuked their accusers," and the sixth that he had made a confederation of heretics to maintain and defend his treasons and heresies.

That Gardiner and his party were elated at the crushing of their most formidable opponent, and expected wonderful things to come to pass, was natural. They had compassed his death, and at once endeavoured to reap the fruits. They secured a bill for the better enforcement of the provisions of the Six Articles, but the penalties, though as ruthless as formerly for all manner of heresies touching the most holy and blessed Sacrament of the altar, were considerably relaxed in the matter of clerical matrimony. They brought three Protestant teachers, named Barnes, Gerard (or Garret), and Jerome, to the stake and burnt them as detestable and abominable heretics, three other poor fellows as a foil being hanged the same day as traitors. And they secured the publication of another manual of doctrine.

The history of this new book of doctrine was rather curious. In 1540 a committee of divines had been appointed for the purpose of drawing up a new expression of Church teaching, and with a cleverness that was characteristic of the man, Gardiner secured an Act of Parliament to the effect that whatever they drew up was to be believed and accepted by all churchmen. The idea was to steal a march upon Cranmer, and get him to approve of what had been drawn up by the old party without his knowledge. The articles were drawn up, but Cranmer acted with remarkable courage and consistency, and refused to sanction them. Still the new work when it came forth bore traces of Gardiner's handiwork. It was known as The Necessary Erudition of any Christian Man, or the King's Book, and, though on much the same lines as the Institution, was decidedly more Romish in tone.

Collier in comparing it with the Institution, or the Bishops' Book, declares that "the Erudition bends to the Six Articles, and in some points of controversy drives further into the doctrines of the Roman Communion. . . . In a word, where the Erudition differs from the Institution it seems mostly to lose ground, to go off from the primitive plan, and to reform backwards" (Collier, vol. ii., book iii., p. 191).

It contained doctrinal expositions upon the nature of faith; the articles of the creed; the seven sacraments; the Ten Commandments; the Lord's Prayer and Ave Maria; and also upon the subjects of Freewill, Justification, Good Works, and prayers for souls departed ("Formularies of Faith," Oxford, pp. 213–377; Burnet, i. 442–452).

(It seems almost unnecessary to again remind the reader that this formulary has not the slightest value as a standard of doctrine in the Church of England now. That it was approved by convocation then gives it no authority now.* Nor does the fact of its declaring this or that with regard to any point make the doctrine in question a valid Anglican doctrine. The very fact that it formally taught that there were *seven* sacraments—the Romish doctrine—and that the Church of England now formally denies this and says in the twenty-fifth Article that there are but two, shows sufficiently the difference in the teach-

* Perry, following Wilkins, says the Erudition was submitted to convocation for its approval. Collier seems to hint that it was not, though his authority is uncertain, and his language vague.

Collier also follows Burnet in assuming that Fuller must have mistaken when he gave the date of the Erudition as 1540. The probable date was 1542.

ing of the Church of England in those days and now.)

In many ways the King's Book was valuable. It contained not a little that was excellent practically, morally, and in some things doctrinally. In the Article on the sacrament of orders it pricked the bubble of the pretended primacy of the Pope in a series of arguments worthy of Barrow himself. In the ninth Article of the creed it took a truly Catholic view of that much travestied subject, the Catholic Church, and in the articles on prayers for the dead made a strong protest against the fond and great abuses of the Papal system of pardons. But for all that it was an exposition of doctrine that was in keeping with the Six Articles, and might be defined by the oft-employed expression, "Popery without the Pope."

And yet, in spite of these temporary successes of Gardiner and the old party, the fall of Cromwell did not bring the ruin that both friends and foes expected. After the first reactionary effects, the tide of reformation flowed about where it was before. The Bible was allowed to be circulated, and though its private reading was discouraged in the case of all beneath the degree of gentlemen, it still lay open for the people, and was read in the churches.* Injunctions were sent to the clergy ordering them to read the Bible, live good lives, and teach the people simply and plainly.

Then, too, Cranmer was still left.

* A copy of the proclamation, ordering a copy of the Bible of the largest and greatest volume to be set up openly in every church in the realm of England, will be found in Burnet's "Records," 1, iii. 63. It is interesting reading.

And in spite of the malignity of the past, and the prejudice of the present, Thomas Cranmer was unquestionably the master spirit of the Reformation of the Church of England. He was not as strong a man as Cromwell, as clever a man as Erasmus, as eloquent a man as Latimer, or as bold a man as Luther. But he was a great man in many ways, and he was the man of the hour. He had the Divine gift of common-sense, and the Divine grace of patience. He knew when to be silent, and he knew when to speak. Men have called him a coward. They have accused him of absence of principle. They assert that his character was abject and yielding. They taunt him with his silence when as a brave man he should have spoken, and with submission when as a true man he should have opposed. There may be another explanation. There were times when boldness would have been madness, and opposition folly. A general may retreat, and still be brave. And no man seems to have mastered better than Cranmer the great secret of statesmanship, the power to wait patiently on time; to be quiet when it would be madness to speak; to wait when it would be folly to press. He has been unfairly accused of not opposing the Six Articles Bill because he was an inconsistent coward. But he was no coward then, if Burnet can be trusted.* And afterwards he was no coward, for when all brave men in England were afraid to open

* "Cranmer was both a good subject and a modest and discreet man, and so would obey and submit as far as he might without sin; yet when his conscience charged him to appear against anything that the king pressed him to, as in the matter of the Six Articles, he did it with much resolution and boldness" (Burnet, Appendix, "Hist. Refor.," ii. 413).

their lips, he alone dared to plead for Anne. Nor was he a coward when, not long after, he stood up, almost alone, against the angry lords and pleaded like a man for Cromwell; nor when, a few years later, he stood an *Athanasius contra mundum* in the Legislature against the Bloody Statute.*

It has been thought that he was a time-serving knave because he did not stand by Lambert, or because he more than once gave way to the king. But at the time of Lambert's death he was at least a consubstantiationist, and as to giving in to the king, there were times, as we all know, when it would have been infatuation not to have done so. The times were hard; as Bishop Burnet said, very ticklish. The king was hard. The questions of action were almost maddening at times. It is easy for men in these days to criticize, but a poor and shallow thing it is to condemn a man in a situation like his. For long weeks and months together, he could simply do nothing. And like a wise man he did not try. He saw that it would be of no use. And then at other times he saw an opening. At once he seized it, worked like a man, and made the most of it.

> "To grasp the skirts of happy chance,
> And breast the blows of circumstance."

And so through all the dreary years till Edward's day, Cranmer fought and wrought almost alone. He could not do much. *But he did what he could.*

He saw throughout the Church of England those Romish practices observed which, within a generation, were to be repudiated by the Church as superstitious

* Read the touching letter to the king given in Froude, iii. 503; and *see* Burnet, i. 497.

follies. He heard those Romish doctrines preached, which were blasphemous and false in the light of Scripture and reason. He saw Church people urged by the bishops and clergy to carry candles, and pray to saints, and creep to the cross, and venerate the transubstantiated Christ, and deck the images of the saints, and cherish the thousand and one superstitions of Rome. He saw the confessional box in full operation, and the saying of masses everywhere enforced. An ecclesiastic could lead about with him two women, though the one was not his sister, nor the other his wife, and get absolution; but there was no pardon for a layman who refused to gaze upon the Sacrament when it was carried about (Art. xxv.), or worship in the mass. A priest could commit the vilest sins, even monstrous crimes, and be still a good churchman, but if a layman dared to believe what is now Church teaching on the subject of the Sacrament he would be burned to death by the Church of England as a heretic (Perry, ii. 167; Froude, ii. 446; iii. 407).

He saw all these things, and what could he do? As we said before he could only wait and do what he could.

LXXXI. *Was Cranmer able then to advance in any material way the cause of the Reformation from the time of the downfall of Cromwell?*

He was.

Though he could not do much, what Archbishop Cranmer effected during those last few years of the reign of Henry VIII. was neither transitory nor insignificant. The king was as Romish as ever; Gardiner's star was still in the ascendant. Bonner was busy, and the priesthood were almost to a man for Popery. The outlook for a Reformer in the Protestant direction

was certainly not very bright. But in three very important matters he advanced the principles of the Reformation.

In the first place, he was the means of keeping the Bible for the people (Burnet, i. 417–468).

Why the king should have so befriended the circulation of the Bible, it is hard to say. But he did. And in spite of the old Romish cant about the reading of the Scriptures being the mother of all heresy and the father of all schism, he ordered its reading in the church, and its study by the people. The Romanists in 1543 and 1546 got influence enough to curtail its reading, but the influence of Cranmer was stronger than all, and they could not destroy it. In spite of the wily endeavours of Bonner and Gardiner, the great Bible, or as it was aptly called, Cranmer's Bible, was maintained in the Church till the end of the reign untouched by any dishonouring hand, and open for all the people, and permission was also obtained for the people to buy Bibles and have them at home. Who can ever estimate the effect upon the nation of that silent but potent force, the seed of the Word, that was thus scattered in the hearts of the Church people of England, or tell how many by searching the Scriptures were brought to the knowledge of the truth?

The Church of England has Cranmer to thank for this.*

* "One thing was very remarkable, which was this year granted at Cranmer's intercession. There was nothing could so much recover reformation, that was declining so fast, as the free use of the Scriptures; and though these had been set up in the churches a year ago, yet he pressed, and now procured leave, for private persons to buy Bibles, and keep them in their houses. So this was granted by letters patents . . . the substance of which was, 'That the King was desirous

In the second place, he was the means of reviving the practice of preaching in the Church.

During the Romish days the Church of England had little preaching. The priests confined themselves to ceremonies, and rarely, if ever, preached except in Lent. The ideas of 1 Cor. ix. 16, and 2 Tim. iv. 2, were unknown. Years after, Martin Bucer said you could find parishes in the Church of England where there had not been a sermon for some years. "In this country the pastors of the Churches have hitherto chiefly confined their duties to ceremonies, and have very rarely preached." "Very few parishes have pastors, . . . in many there are substitutes who, for the most part, cannot even read English, and who are in heart mere papists." "And you are well aware how little can be effected for the restoration of the kingdom of Christ by mere ordinances, and the removal of instruments of superstition" (Orig. Lett., Park. Soc., pp. 535, 543). In many places the friars preached sensational sermons. But they were mere ranters, and knew little or nothing of the Gospel (Burnet, i. 489, 490).

It was owing to Cranmer, in a great measure, that this great lever of apostolic power was once more

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to have his subjects attain the knowledge of God's Word.' . . . But Gardiner opposed this all he could: and one day, in a conference before the King, he provoked Cranmer to shew any difference between the authority of the Scriptures, and of the apostolical canons, which he pretended were equal to the other writings of the apostles. Upon which they disputed for some time; but the King perceived solid learning tempered with great modesty in what Cranmer said; and nothing but vanity and affectation in Gardiner's reasonings. So he took him up sharply, and told him, that Cranmer was an old and experienced captain, and was not to be troubled by fresh men and novices." (Burnet, iii. 417.)

given to the Church. Licences were given to certain gifted men to freely preach the Gospel, and the preaching of such sermons as was common in the Popish days was discouraged. And to help the clergy in this novel work, a book of Homilies was drawn up by Cranmer in obedience to a resolution of Convocation.

In the third place, he was the means of securing for English churchmen that distinctive glory of the Church of England, the prayers of the people in their native English tongue.

Ten years had slipped by since Henry's Primer had given to English Church people the idea of English prayers. It was the inauguration of a great principle, but it was not as remarkable a step as this. For the distinctive feature of this was *Church* prayer; that is, public prayer *in the Church.*

The Primer had only to do with private prayers. It was, indeed, a novelty; yet, even from the Roman stand-point, it was hardly to be accounted revolutionary. But Cranmer's procedure was distinctly non-Roman, if not anti-Roman.

The language of the Roman Catholic Church was Latin. It was the authorized language; the only language authorized by the Roman Catholic Church for public worship. To use any other was rebellion from the Roman view-point. The mandate issued in 1544, to use certain English prayers in all the Churches of all the dioceses of the realm, was thus a step of great significance.

It may be safely asserted that, next to the promulgation of the Holy Scriptures, the authorization of the use of prayers in their own tongue by the Church people of England was the most important step in forwarding the Reformation of the Church during the

sixteenth century. It did not supersede the ecclesiastical use of Latin, and supplant it with the vulgar tongue. The time was not ripe for that. But it tampered with one of the first ecclesiastical principles of Rome. It effectually undermined a Roman stronghold. It broke the spell of an enslaving medium. And thus it prepared the way for the extinction of the ecclesiastical use of Latin, and the complete establishment of that distinctive glory of the worship of England's reformed and apostolic Church—common prayer in the people's tongue.

For this great work, the reform of the Church system of worship, the thanks of English churchmen are chiefly due to the sanctified sagacity and enlightened scholarship of Thomas Cranmer.

It was in a session of Convocation in the year 1543 that he began the work in earnest. Up to this time the worship of the Church of England was the slightly Anglicanized form of the ritual of the Church of Rome. It was simply a local adaptation of the universal worship of the Latin Church, the differences between it and the Roman mass being minor, accidental, and trifling. That is, it was the Romish ritual of the Roman mass issued with local peculiarities in the dioceses of Salisbury (Sarum), Hereford, Bangor, York, and Lincoln. The Sarum use at this time was generally used. It was as different in essence from our Church of England service to-day, as the Roman Pontifical is from the Epistle to Titus.

It was all in Latin. It was full of the dark and dumb ceremonies of the mass with its sacrificial vestments and crossings, its prostrations and prayers through the saints, and prayer for the dead, its kissings of pax, and paten, and corporals, and adora-

tions of the host (*see* Maskell's "Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England," Oxford. The Clarendon Press. Dodd's "Translation of the Sarum Mass"). It was all sung. The very reading of the Scriptures was in Latin, what little there was of it, for what was read in church was mostly a pack of legendary nonsense, a confusion of uncertain stories and legends, as our Prayer-Book tersely declares, "some untrue, some vain, some superstitious."

The church service, or church worship of the pre-Reformation Church of England in one word, was a ceremonial worship full of vanity, superstition, abuses, and unprofitableness. Its excess of dark and dumb ceremonies at once blinded the people and obscured the glory of God (Preface: "Book of Common Prayer:" Of Ceremonies*).

The first step in the great work of the liturgical reformation of the Church of England, was the work of correcting and amending the old forms of worship. For this purpose, a committee was appointed early in 1543. Their line of work was described very clearly and succinctly. In the first place, they were to carefully expunge from every service-book in the Church of England the name of the Bishop of Rome. Then they were to abolish from all the service-books and calendars the names of any saints not mentioned in the Scriptures or in authentic writers. And in the

* "All ceremonies are but beggarly things, dumb and dead, if the meaning of them be not known. . . . But his Grace seeth priests much readier to deal holy bread, to sprinkle holy water, than to teach the people what dealing or sprinkling sheweth. If the priests would exhort their parishioners, and put them in remembrance of the things that indeed work all our salvation, neither the ceremonies would be dumb. . . ."—*King's Proclamation*, 1539.

third place, they were to see *that the services were made out of Scripture and other authentic doctors.* The Church was not yet ready for the perfect carrying out of the last provision, but the idea was a grand one. It was the practical inauguration of what may distinctively be called a great principle of the Reformation ; a principle, which, in God's providence, far outgrew the limited intentions of those who proposed it.

The chief result of this was an English translation of the Litany made by Cranmer, the forerunner of our Book of Common Prayer. And in the month of June, 1544, the king's mandate was sent to Archbishop Cranmer, directing him to order all the bishops of his province to bring into use in all the churches these godly prayers, in our native English tongue (Burnet, Records, "History of the Reformation," ii. 385).

It was a captivating innovation.

It struck at once a sympathetic chord in the hearts of English Churchmen. It endeared religion to the people. It made the laity feel that Church worship was no longer the monopoly of the clergy and the choir. The common people began to realize that they were to be no more mere spectators of a religious performance, but intelligent participants in the common worship of God. They were unitedly to co-operate in the public service of the Church, and as the king's proclamation put it, "pray like reasonable beings in their own language." In the words of a prominent Church layman of the day, it was "the goodliest hearing that ever was in this realm."

Compared, of course, with what we have now, it was a mere nothing. The whole worship of the realm save this was still in Latin, and the main service of the Church was the mass, which as yet was

not even in one remote degree "turned into a communion." Even the English Litany and the English Lord's Prayer were generally sung, a thing that always cuts off a proportion of the worshippers from participating in the service. But the fact remains, that prayers were now in the tongue of the people. The great Protestant Church principle of Art. xxiv. had been secured.

Thus, with varying success to the very end of the reign of Henry VIII., Cranmer strove for the principles of the Reformation.

It was a sore struggle. For a long period he stood almost alone, with the whole Popish party against him. "Now Cranmer was left alone, without friend or support," says Bishop Burnet, in narrating the death of the Duke of Suffolk (*Ibid.*, i. 514). The malice of the Romanists was untiring. "Potently, indeed, was he opposed, and with a malice of great size."

> "He's a rank weed,
> And we must root him out."—*Henry VIII.*, Act v. Sc. i.

They did all they could to ruin Cranmer, and would surely have done so if it had not been for the friendship of the king. Why Henry should have befriended Cranmer as he did, especially towards the end of his reign, is one of the enigmas of this most puzzling era. Some writers think it was due to feelings of personal affection. This certainly was the case. The Archbishop, as Shakespeare put it, was the king's hand and tongue, and who dare speak one syllable against him? In the opinion of Bishop Burnet, the esteem of the king was based upon his profound respect for a man whose character was not only highly superior to his own, but shone in brightest contrast to that of his foes;

and Shakespeare, who was generally a shrewd judge of actions, and managed to catch the truth of history, took the same view.

> *King Henry.* . . . "Look, the good man weeps!
> He's honest, on mine honour. God's blest Mother!
> I swear he is true-hearted; and a soul
> None better in my kingdom."

Henry, with all his infamy, was still an Englishman, and the sturdy bluffness that would make him disgusted with the duplicity of an intriguer like Gardiner (Perry, ii. 180–185; Burnet, i. 539–547), was the very characteristic to awaken admiration for the candour and integrity of a man like Cranmer. To find a man with the courage of his convictions, and so superior to the Machiavelism of the Popish party, that he dared to oppose even his king for the sake of what he believed to be God's truth, and whose Christian character was so thoroughly consistent and in accord with the religion he professed (Burnet, i. 508, 509, 538), was quite sufficient to win his respect.

> "Take him and use him well; he's worthy of it.
> I will say this much for him, if a prince
> May be beholding to a subject, I
> Am for his love and service so to him."

So Cranmer held fast to his convictions, and the king held fast to Cranmer. At his intercession he ordered the disuse of certain Popish observances, and even seems to have contemplated the abolition of the mass and the revival of the apostolic order of the Holy Communion. It was for Cranmer he sent in his dying hour;* it was Cranmer who whispered in his dying moments the comfortable promises of the Gospel,

* "He said, if any Churchman should be sent for, it should be Archbishop Cranmer" (Burnet, i. 541).

and asked him to give a token that he put his trust in God through Jesus Christ; and holding Cranmer's hand, he died.*

King Henry VIII. died in the end of January, 1547. He was, with two brief exceptions, the last representative of medievalism on the throne of England.

His reign is as difficult to understand as his character.

It was a reign of ebb and flow, of action and re-action. It was a reign of inconsistency and ambiguity; of hesitation and contradiction. In this reign was witnessed the assertion of the right of national ecclesiastical independence by a king, who, not many years before, had stood forth as the champion of "Catholic" unity against the French monarch who maintained this national right of ecclesiastical independence. In this reign men saw the Popish Bishop Tonstal giving his sanction to the very Bible which he had once furiously committed to the flames; and Bishop Gardiner writing as a Papist a vindication of the king's conduct in the matter of Fisher and More. In this reign men beheld with wonder a man like Bonner sending forth injunctions enjoining the reading of the Bible, and the preaching of the simple Gospel; and a man like Bilney denying, like Peter, the faith of the Master he so dearly loved. And strangest of all, it was a reign in which the

* It is not too much to say that the treatment Cranmer has received from certain Church historians is unjust to a degree. His alleged pusillanimity and inconsistency have been unduly magnified; his efforts to promote the principles of the Reformation misrepresented and undervalued. In fact, one is led almost to the conclusion that, with historians of the Tractarian school, the slanderous representation of Roman Catholic authors is accepted in preference to that of Fox or Burnet.

keystone of Popery was demolished by one of the most ardent of Papists.

And yet, throughout all the ebb and flow, action and re-action, consistency and contradiction, one cannot fail to see the working of the hand of God. In all these things, and through all these men, He was slowly working out His great purpose of the restoration to England in England's Church of that primitive and Scriptural order of Christianity, which He committed through His Apostles to the ages. These things were but the preparatory stages to a great movement. The instruments were fallible and passionate men ; but the Worker of all was God.

LXXXII. *What then, let us ask as we leave this momentous epoch, was the precise position of the Church of England at the end of the reign of Henry VIII.? Was it Romanist or Protestant? Was it Papist or Reformed?*

It was neither. It was both.

This in truth is the only answer. It was not Romanist, for it had been severed from the Pope, the centre of "Catholic" unity. It was Romanist, for it held as *de fide* the body of Roman Catholic doctrine. It was not Protestant, for its standard was the Six Articles, and the Erudition was an official interpretation of its teaching. It *was* Protestant, for it protested not only against the Pope's supremacy, but against many Popish superstitions.

The Church of England was at that time in the *via media Anglicana.*

It had come out of the Roman camp, and yet it had not come over to the Protestant party. It had identified itself with the attitude of the continental reformers in its declarations of independence,

and yet it asserted it had not departed from the Roman Catholic faith. It was in the position of inconsistency and contradiction. It was neither one thing nor the other. It was neither sound Protestant nor real Papist. By the grace of God it was soon to abandon this unsatisfactory attitude, and to clearly assume the Protestant position in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth. But up to this time, though much had been cast down, little, very little, had been built up, and the destructive had preponderated vastly over the constructive phase of the reformation movement.

The Church, like Ephraim, was a cake not turned.

And yet as we calmly look over this momentous epoch, we cannot help being struck with the advance that had been made. Protestant in the modern evangelical sense the Church was not ; but how great had been the progress in that direction.

Let the reader carefully consider these facts.

Twenty years before, the Church of England was Popish to the core. The king was a Papist, the clergy were Papists, the ritual and doctrine were Papist. To human eyes there was not a principle of reform that had a chance of foothold.

Twenty years of crisis and action elapse, and what came to pass ?

The Church of England, *as a Church*, has thrown to the ground one of the mightiest and most deeply entrenched of the Roman strongholds, the supremacy of the Pope. It has snapped asunder the chain of Papal bondage. It has crushed like a shell the figment of Papal infallibility and appellate authority. It has come forth into the liberty wherewith Christ set it free.

The Church of England, *as a Church*, has asserted distinctly and finally the right of a particular or national Church, not only to act for itself in matters ecclesiastical, but even to formulate its own articles of doctrine.

The Church of England, *as a Church*, in spite of centuries of "Catholic" doctrine and practice, has asserted the great Protestant principle of the right of the laity to an open Bible, and the people's right to read it for themselves.

The Church of England, *as a Church*, in spite of centuries of "Catholic" teaching and practice, has flung the gauntlet of defiance at Roman custom, and proclaimed for itself the great Protestant principle of the right of the people to worship in their own native tongue.

The Church of England, *as a Church*, has not only identified itself with the limited intention of those Romanist Reformers who contemplated mere moral reforms in the Church, but has passed radically beyond them by adopting a series of reforms in the things to be believed, apart from, and in opposition to, the Roman communion.

The Church of England, *as a Church*, has declared its dissatisfaction with the prevailing system of "Catholic" worship; it has pronounced time-honoured religious customs to be superstitions, and universally practised rites to be deceptive and vain; it has prohibited the observance of ceremonies for centuries associated with "Catholic" ritual, and ordered the celebration of certain services of the Church in a manner altogether unknown at Rome.

The Church of England, *as a Church*, is not yet

reformed. It is not yet prepared to abandon the so-called "Catholic" position in the great and essential matters of Roman doctrine. It is still halting between two opinions. It is still in the *via media* of Popery without the Pope.

Yet he will miss the most important point of the Church history of this period, who fails to grasp this great fact, which may be regarded as the conclusion and epitome of the ecclesiastical events of that transitional reign: *That in the reign of Henry VIII. little by little, here a little and there a little as yet indeed, in germ, and in limited degree, but still certainly and clearly, with claim of right and authoritative sanction, a number of those fundamental principles of the Reformation have been asserted in the Church, and for the Church, and by the Church, which afterwards were to become in their full and perfect development the distinctive Protestant and evangelical principles of the Church of England; the supremacy and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, the necessity of common prayer, the danger of superstitions, the spiritual aspect of the Catholic Church, and the right of every particular or national Church, not only to ordain, or change, or abolish rites and ceremonies of the Church, but even to formulate its doctrine according to God's Word.*

The Church of England at the end of the reign of Henry VIII., to use Strype's great simile, was in the twilight of the early dawn.

"The sun of truth was now but rising, and breaking through the mists of that idolatry, superstition, and ignorance that had so long prevailed in this nation and the rest of the world, and was not yet advanced to its meridian brightness."

Or, to use the simile of One greater than Strype, the progress of the Church before, and during, and after the Reformation, was like the growth of corn, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUSION.

IT remains for us to summarize in this chapter the results of our investigation of each of the successive phases of the Church of England in the pre-Reformation period.

In the first place, there can be no reasonable doubt that during the first phase of its development the English Church was a really independent branch of the Catholic Church.* The early British Church held the Catholic faith, observed Catholic worship, and, though it was gradually tainted by the general doctrinal corruptions of the post-Apostolic Church, it was neither identical with Rome nor subject to Rome.

After the mission of Augustine and the archiepiscopate of Theodore, the English Church became more and more identified with Rome in matters of doctrine and ritual, an identification that was undisturbed by the political Protestantism of William and Lanfranc, and the Parliamentary Protestantism of the reign of Edward III. Up to the time of Henry VIII. there was no demonstrable difference in polity or

* The word Catholic is here employed in the proper historical acceptation of the term, as it is used, for instance, in the Athanasian creed.

doctrine between the pre-Reformation Church in England and the rest of Western Christendom.

In the theory and practice of the English Church for some centuries before the Reformation, the Pope was the acknowledged head of the Church on earth, and the centre of Catholic unity; and the ritual of Church worship and the principles of Church teaching, were the ritual and teaching of the Church of Rome. Trivial and non-essential differences of detail and ritual existed, but it is impossible to point to any definite teaching of the Church of England as distinct from the teaching of the Church of Rome.

The incipient protests of Grosseteste, the more enlightened protests of Wycliffe, and the treatment of heretics by the English Church, are additional proof of the ultramontanism of England's Church in its constitution and principles.

In the earlier phases of the Reformation era this identity remained unbroken.

The efforts of the educational reformers of the Church of England were in no wise inconsistent with the maintenance of Anglican identity with Roman Catholicism. The Reformation polity of Erasmus, and Wolsey, and Warham, and More, contained no scheme of separation.

In the rejection of the Papal supremacy by Henry VIII., the Church of England once more assumed its long abandoned position as an independent Church, and by the promulgation of independent ecclesiastical enactments, and the publication of independent doctrinal formularies differing from and in protest against the erring Roman Church, proclaimed at once its right to separate from the apostate Latin communion, and to reassert for itself

the doctrinal position of the primitive Catholic Church.

Yet in spite of the incipient reformation of the reign of Henry VIII., in spite of the achievement of Anglican autonomy, the assertion of Anglican doctrine, and the adoption of Anglican forms, the difference between the Church of England at the end of that reign and the Church of England now, was fundamental and profound.

If we place the Church of England that now is, side by side with the Church of England that then was, the contrast cannot fail to awaken an impression of the essential difference in position, character, and principles.

In the semi-reformed Church of England at the end of the reign of Henry VIII., the clergy were ordained according to the matter, and form, and intention of the Roman ordinal. They received by the sacrament of orders the presumed grace of a sacrificial character, and were made sacrificing priests by the investiture of the sacerdotal vestment, the tradition of the instruments, and the pronunciation of the ordaining formula: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate mass both for the living and the dead."

In the Church of England now, the clergy are ordained as priests in the Church of God to be preachers of the Word of God and ministers of the sacraments; holy orders is expressly denied to be a sacrament; the symbolical accessories, the instituting words, and the formal intention of constituting a sacrificing priest are absent; and the purpose, object, and form of the ordination of the Anglican ordinal is radically different from that of the Roman Pontifical,

being framed by men whose views with regard to the nature and purpose of the ministry were totally different from those of the Church of Rome.

In the semi-reformed Church of England in 1540, the chief object of Church service was the sacrifice of the mass. The sum of Church worship was the visible offering of the sacrifice of Christ's body upon the altar by the priest. The worshippers gathered to adore a priest-made deity as a sacrifice for the living and the dead; and the witnessing of that ceremonial as an efficacious offering for sin was counted the chief part of God's service.

In the Church of England now, so different is the doctrine and intention of the Church, there is an intentional omission of the term altar; the sacrifice of masses and the offering of Christ by the priest for the living and the dead to have remission of pain and guilt, are stigmatized as blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits; and two rubrics are inserted at the end of the order of the administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion, one of which shows that the administration of the Holy Communion is not a necessary or indispensable part of the morning service of the Church, and another which actually forbids the celebration of the Holy Communion unless there be a certain number of communicants. The central object of the Roman service is the offering and adoration of the mass sacrifice. The central object of the Anglican is spiritual communion with Christ at His table in the consecrated but unchanged elements of bread and wine; sacramental adoration is declared to be idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians; and any lifting up or worshipping of the sacrament is expressly forbidden.

In the semi-reformed Church of England the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of the bread and wine, was held *de fide* as the teaching of the Church, and the denial of this doctrine by a Churchman meant the penalty of death. In the Church of England now, that doctrine is expressly denied. It is declared to be repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, to overthrow the nature of the sacrament, and to have given occasion to many superstitions. And, on the other hand, it is taught that the body of Christ is given, and taken, and eaten, only after an heavenly or spiritual manner; that the means whereby the body of Christ is received and taken and eaten in the Supper is (not the hand or the mouth, but) faith; that men may take and eat the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, that is the elements of bread and wine, and yet not eat the body of Christ; and that we may not receive the sacrament in the mouth, and yet by true repentance and steadfast faith eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ (Art. xxviii., xxix., and Rubric of Communion of the Sick).

In the semi-reformed Church of England, an elaborate system of saint invocation was practised, and the complicated doctrine of their adoration was taught. The worship of the Virgin Mary, the intercession of angels and archangels, and patriarchs and apostles, prayers to the dead and prayers for the dead, were inculcated as part of the Church's faith, and believed and practised by the faithful. The Litany alone contained no less than sixty-two petitions to angels and archangels and departed saints.

The Church of England now has removed from the Book of Common Prayer every trace of saint invoca-

tion and saint intercession, of adoration and worship of the Virgin Mary, of prayers to the dead and prayers for the dead, and teaches that the Romish doctrine concerning the invocation of saints is a fond thing vainly invented, and repugnant to the Word of God.

The semi-reformed Church of England taught and practised the deadly doctrine of necessary secret and entire confession to the priest as a necessary part of salvation, and indispensable to the reception of the Eucharist; excommunicated those who persisted in its neglect; and imposed therein works of penance as a satisfaction to God.

The Church of England now repudiates this doctrine; it denies that penance (which includes auricular confession) is a sacrament, and that works of penance can give satisfaction to God; it has removed the mention of auricular confession from the Prayer-Book, and taken from the rubric any means of performing it.

In the semi-reformed Church of England the clergy were compelled to be single, the celibacy of the clergy being enforced.

The Church of England now teaches that "Bishops, priests, and deacons, are not commanded by God's law, either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; and that it is, therefore, lawful for them to marry, as for all other Christian men."

In the semi-reformed Church of England the services of the Church were nearly all in Latin, the mass service especially being always performed in that language.

The Church of England now teaches that "it is a

thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to minister the sacraments in a tongue not understanded of the people."

The semi-reformed Church of England authorized and performed an excessive multitude of dumb and dark ceremonies in the conduct of public worship and the celebration of the sacraments; the use of incense and holy water, the practice of extreme unction and commemoration of the dead, kissing the crucifix and chanting requiems; and those ceremonies which were performed at the ministration of baptism — such as salt, oil, cream, spittle, candle, chrism, and conjuring the devil.

In the Church of England now those dumb and dark ceremonies are no longer countenanced; and, owing to the strenuous efforts of the reformers, all that was pure, and Scriptural, and edifying in ancient worship has been retained, while all that was false or dangerous, as tending to superstition and error, has been removed.*

The change that was effected in the reformation of the Church of England is thus perceived to have been no accidental or non-essential modification of the Church's constitution; it was a real and essential change of the Church's form. The Church was reformed. A distinct and positive Church position was assumed. The *via media* was abandoned. And the Anglican Church stepped clearly forth on a

* For a more detailed statement of these contrasts, the reader is referred to my work, the "Protestantism of the Prayer-Book" (Shaw & Co., London), especially to chapters iv., v., vi., and ix., where all authorities are carefully cited.

decided ground, and took its stand as a reformed and national Church upon the principles of the Reformation.

There was scarcely a distinctive article of the Church of Rome that was not distinctly denied by the Church of England. There was scarcely a distinctive article of the reformed faith that was not distinctly formulated as the doctrine and teaching of the Church of England.*

The formulated teaching of the Church of England with regard to the rule of faith, justification by faith, the Catholic Church, the two sacraments, holy orders, and Divine worship, was at once a reassertion and reconstruction of the teaching of Christ and His apostles according to the Holy Scriptures, in substantial agreement with the ancient doctrine of the primitive Catholic Church, and the revised doctrine of the reformed Churches; and a dissent from and a protest against the erroneous doctrine of the Church of Rome.

As a movement, the Anglican reformation was a revolt and a reversion. It was a revolt against ritualism in worship, as embodied and practised in a complex system of symbolic ceremonial; and a reversion to the simple, congregational, and edifying worship of the early Church. It abolished the ceremonial of the mass, worship in an unknown tongue, and unmeaning ceremonies; and established on Scrip-

* The contrast between the Tridentine decrees of the Church of Rome and the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England is so profound, that the impartial student will readily perceive that these authoritative teachings of the Church of England were not directed against mere popular Roman abuses, but against fundamental and authoritative Roman doctrines.

tural lines a form of worship that was intended to be intelligible, spiritual, popular.

It was a revolt against Romanism in doctrine, and "the whole trade of the Romish religion" as a system of false doctrine and heresy; and a reversion to the pure foundation of God's Word, the teaching of the Bible, and the Catholic doctrine that Holy Scripture has been since the time of the apostles the sole Divine rule of faith and practice to the Church of Christ.

In this position the Church of England stands to-day.

By a strange and wonderful series of providential events in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth, the Church's reformation was completed, and, by the overruling hand of God, the principles then secured, and the advantages achieved, have since been maintained in the Church. When we consider therefore its degeneracy in the past, and review the weary ages of its decline and fall, we must acknowledge that the emancipation of our once Romanized Church was the wonderful work of God, and declare with adoring gratitude the goodness of the great Head of the Church in effecting that transformation.

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